The Philosophy of the Vallabha School of Vedānta

K. Narain

Śuddhādvaita or the system of Pure Monism of Śrī Vallabhācārya claims to be the most faithful and authentic exposition of the real teachings of the Upaniṣads as it purifies The Non-Dual Ultimate Reality of the extraneous concept of Māyā introduced by Śaṁkara under the influence of Buddhism. In this system we have the concept of Non-Dualism or Advaita in its pristine, Upaniṣadic sense unblemished by Śaṁkara's Illusionism, the concept of a Concrete, Personal and determinate Ultimate Reality. In recent years many important works expounding the philosophy of Śrī Vallabhācārya have been published but none of them have endeavoured a problemwise study of this system which is essential for its proper understanding vis-a-vis the claims of other Vaiṣṇavite schools. This book attempts to supplement this want by undertaking a problemwise exposition of the philosophy of Śrī Vallabha and his followers incorporating the views and solutions of other schools as well.

Vallabhism as a philosophico-religious creed of Vaiṣṇavism has the distinction of putting forward a novel creed and theory of Bhakti known as Puṣṭi-bhakti which acquires a central place in the Śuddhādvaita system. The author has, therefore, discussed it, at length, to distinguish it from other forms of Bhakti propagated in other schools of Vaiṣṇavism. The author has, in this study, based himself only on Śaṁskṛta sources providing the reader with an outline of the basic philosophical and religious theories and concepts of Śrī Vallabhācārya and his followers.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE VĀLLABHA SCHOOL OF VEDĀNTA

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Indological Research Centre

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In revered memory of
my teacher
Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. Umesha Mishra.

PREFACE

The misunderstanding that 'Vedānta Philosophy' is identical with Śāṁkara Vedānta, which persisted for long with the scholars of Indian Philosophy, both Eastern and Western, has been cleared with the strenuous and vigorous efforts of a host of critical treatises written by contemporary eminent scholars. Among the philosophical schools that trace their lineage to the Vedānta or the Philosophy of the Upaniṣads the *Śuddhādvaita* or the system of Pure Monism of Vallabhācārya is claimed to be the most faithful and authentic exposition of the real teachings of the Upaniṣads or the Vedānta since it purified the Non-Dual Ultimate Reality of the extraneous concept of Māyā introduced by Śaṁkara under the influence of Buddhism. The problem with the critics and opponents of Śaṁkara, especially of the Vaiṣṇavite sects, has always been the reclamation and the resuscitation of the 'reality of the world order' and the establishment of the Personal and Concrete character of Absolute Reality or Brahman in the light of the Upaniṣadic dictum that Truth is One and Non-Dual. Yet while seeking a rational justification for both the reality of world and the Absolute Non-Dualism, the *Advaita*, of the Ultimate Truth, these philosophers provided varied interpretations to the concept of the *advaita* characterising it with qualifications. It is to the credit of Śrī Vallabha's intellectual acumen and philosophical genius that in the *Śuddhādvaita* system we have the concept of 'non-dualism' or *advaita* in its pristine Upaniṣadic sense and as the ground of the real manifestation of universe. Of all the adversaries of Śaṁkara, Vallabha seems to be most successful in dispelling the darkness of Illusionism while maintaining the Concrete, Personal and Determinate nature of the Ultimate Truth. Realising the worth and importance of Śrī Vallabha's philosophical contribution to Vedānta, many eminent scholars, in modern times, have endeavoured to explain his system in their writings and have been successful in explaining his philosophy to the students and scholars of Indian

Philosophy, both in East and West, Though their works are lucid expositions of the fundamental philosphical concepts of Vallabhism, they are wanting in a problem-wise study of this system, which is not only essential for the proper understanding of each philosophical problem but is also necessary for locating its place and *raison d'etre* in the light of the solutions offered by other philosophical schools. I have, therefore, ventured to supplement this want by undertaking a problem-wise exposition of the philosophy of Śrī Vallabha and his followers. As a problem-wise philosophical study always demands a comparative outlook, views and solutions of other schools have also been incorporated for a correct and proper appreciation of the validity of the Vallabhite standpoint and their contribution.

Apart from fundamental philosophical questions and meta-physical problems, Vallabhism as a philosophico-religious creed of Vaiṣṇavism, devoted to the propagation of Bhakti as a Supreme Means to the realisation of the *Summum Bonum* of human existence, has the distinction of putting forward a novel creed and theory of Bhakti which, while excelling its earlier accounts in other systems, justifies that it is not only a means but an end in itself. The importance of Śrī Vallabha's *Puṣṭi-bhakti* in his philosophical system is so immense that his Śuddhādvaita School is identified with *Puṣṭi-mārga*. I have, therefore, endeavoured to discuss, a little at length, his theory and practice of Bhakti and its contribution and place in Vaiṣṇavism.

Vallabhācārya's philosophy and religion has a wide-spread popularity in the Central and Western India with the result that there is a good deal of important literature in Indian languages, especially in Gujrātī. I have, however, restricted myself and based this book only on Saṅskṛta sources. Vallabhite literature even in Saṅskṛta is so vast that it would be hypocritical to claim either exhaustiveness or profundity of treatment. This book aims only at providing the reader with an outline of the basic philosophical and religious theories and concepts of Vallabhācārya and his followers.

I express my thanks and gratitude to Śrī Ghanshyamdas Mukhiya of Indore, Śrī Kalādhar Bhaṭṭa of Bombay, Prof. Kedār Nāth Miśra of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi and Miss S.B. Lalge of Madhava College, Ujjain, for their help in providing me with valuable and rare

books during the course of my study. I am grateful to Late Śrī A.M. Sarkar *alias* Sadhu Baba of Asansol for his inspiration and guidance.

With all the joy that I feel while presenting this book to my learned readers the world-over, I conclude with a sombre feeling of grief and helpless-ness at the sudden demise of my wife, Smt. Shail Srivastava, whose silent and sustained contribution to all my intellectual attainments and writings could be realised only after her death, the last year. In her absence, I have but to thank her posthumously in silence.

I am thankful to M/s. Indological Research Centre, Varanasi, for having agreed to publish this work.

I am thankful to M/s. Ayushi Computers, Varanasi, for their hard labour in composing the book so gracefully. My thanks are also due to M/s. Kabra Offsets, Varanasi, for their elegant printing.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The theistic revolt.

The theistic revolt against Śaṁkarācārya's Absolute Monism initiated by Rāmānuja — who constructed a full-grown philosophical system — was an extension of a tradition that existed long before him and of which, as is believed, Bodhāyana and Drāviḍācārya were the earlier exponents. Contemporaneous with the later Upaniṣads, in which the theistic traits were markedly visible in contrast to the old and main Upaniṣads, the Śāśvata and the Ekāyana creeds of philosophy and religious worship were already in existence — on the authority of the Mahābhārata — and these were supplemented by the extensive doctrines of the Pāñcarātra Āgamas emphasising the positive, effulgent and attractive character of Ultimate Reality in whose Benediction lay ultimately the way to the deliverance of the whole mankind. The only way to freedom and, therefore, the only duty of man was to approach the Deity with devotion, self-surrender and love and seek for his benign Grace. The emotional aspect of this philosophical creed became more pronounced in the songs and hymns of Āṛvār saints of South India who approached Nārāyaṇa, the Ultimate Reality, with a beloved's outburst of emotion and yearning for union — the embrace with Divinity being the ultimate aim. The Pāñcarātra Āgamas are really the fountain-head and the main source of the later Vaiṣṇava systems of philosophy that recognise the importance of Devotion as the ultimate instrument of human emancipation and subscribe immensely to the theistic tradition.

Foundational principles of theism.

Theism, as a philosophical creed has its basis on certain indubitable philosophical truths without which the very existence of theism itself is impossible. The first and foremost of these, is the conviction that the Ultimate Reality is a perfect Being or God who consists of infinite attributes, par excellence, such as omniscience,

omnipotence etc., is the eternal basis of the universe and is the ruler of all its animate and inanimate objects. The second important factor in theism is the belief in the eternality and continuity of conscious self - the individual-soul-which in association with inconscient Nature acts and enjoys its fruits and, consequently, suffers on account of the transient character of the objects of cognition. The external-world or the not-self is the third article of belief without whose reality no activity on the part of the individual-soul is ever possible. The reality of these three objects[1] of belief is an essential part of every kind of theistic approach. In addition to these, theism always rests on a deep-rooted faith that it is only the heart's approach to Divinity with a feeling of self-surrender that is the ultimate instrument of human emancipation. The only real approach to Him is one of Love, in all its hues, and His Grace the only stamp of soul's deliverance.

The Bhāgavata and Pāñcarātra tradition.

The Bhāgavata and Pāñcarātra tradition has always exhibited its full consciousness of the above elements of theistic behaviour with the consequence that it has been the foundation and the fountain-source of almost all the theistic philosophies in India after the Upaniṣadic period. The earlier and the main Upaniṣads have rarely demonstrated the fervour for the theistic approach towards Ultimate Reality; to the seers of these Upaniṣads the intuitive experience or knowledge of Reality was the only true means for the attainment of Immortality. Though the importance and utility of worship (*Upāsanā*) was recognized and stressed upon by them, yet *upāsanā* as preached in these texts seems to be bereft of the intensity of feeling and the high-pitch of emotionalism and illumination which is the real connotation of the term '*bhakti*' or devotion. The earlier Upaniṣads were emphatic on the point that it is *jñāna* that paves the way for salvation. The traits of *bhakti* are, however, more frequently discernable in the later Upaniṣads, constituting the bulk of the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Upaniṣads, and as such they happen to be the mainstay and the authority of the theistic interpreters of Vedānta.

Bhakti in Upaniṣads.

While studying the Upaniṣads one may get an idea about the basic features of the construction of these texts. Most of the earlier

1. Mr. Atkinson Lee has elaborately dealt with these objects of belief in his '*The Groundwork of the Philosophy of Religion*'.

The Upaniṣadic method.

ones are collections of the teachings of seers, meant probably to serve as text-books for the students of Vedic Schools (*śākhās*), sprinkled with lively anecdotes and mythology. Though, in these, diverse methods have been employed for expounding the truth desired to be communicated by the teacher yet they have very frequently resorted to the dialectical or the dialogue-method, a method so common with the ancients all over the civilized-world. This method, notwithstanding its utility in driving home the real import of the communication had a major drawback; in this, the teacher was usually restricted to the question put forward by his student and as such he could hardly touch upon other issues, howsoever important, related to the problem. The result was, very often, a plethora of contradictory views on many problems of far-reaching importance.

Apart from this, the very nature of the Upaniṣadic teaching, which has earned for itself the title of 'revelation' or the *śruti* since time immemorial, is also responsible for the appearance of contradiction. The thought conveyed by the seer was not "any external message delivered to man from without but a divine afflatus springing, from within, the result of inspiration from God-intoxication."[1] The Vedāntic method was one of intuition — and not of ratiocination — and if there was any contradiction it was of an intuition by another intuition. What has subscribed most to the possibility of an apparent contradiction in these teachings is the necessity of the translation of effulgent intuitive divine experience into the language of the humans by the employment of earthly symbols.

The expression of the transcendental experience through an empirical medium is deficient in more than one count. First of all, it is really doubtful if the various seers of the Upaniṣads had a complete and total experience of the Infinite Reality in their moments of divine revelation for it would be an affront to the infinite and illimitable nature of Divinity; most probably they were blessed with knowledge of Its aspects. The results of such revelations in the various texts have, at time, disclosed their apparent contradictions. The real formidable difficulty steps in when these intuitions are desired

Appearance of contradiction – need for synthesis.

1. Ranade, R.D. : *Constructive Survey of Upaniṣadic Philosophy*, p.6.

to be expressed in a human language whose symbols belong to the empirical and the relative and are utterly insufficient to reveal the transcendent; it is no wonder that those who themselves have not been blessed with the intuitive experience of the Divine have understood the meaning of these symbols in diverse, and, very often, in contradictory ways. Such contradictory revelations and viewpoints in the different texts of the Upaniṣads led to the tendency of according a synthesis of such oppositions by explaining the meaning of the texts and resolving their differences; such a synthesis and harmonisation was of paramount importance in view of the supreme testimony that was accorded to these *śrutis* by the intellectual and the priestly community of those times and any lurking sense of duplicity in their sayings would have gone off at a tangent to their accredited validity (*prāmāṇya*) in transcendental matters. The *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa (Vyāsa according to Vaiṣṇavite interpreters) are an attempt in this direction. The main purpose of these *sūtras* is to establish logically and with the force of arguments that Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, which is the cause of the origin, sustenance and destruction of world, is the main object of the Upaniṣadic enquiry and all references, such as *jyoti*, *prāṇa* etc., as the ultimate cause are intended to be made about Him.

The *Brahmasūtras*.

He is the one ultimate cause, both the material and the instrumental, of the world origination etc. and the real salvation of the individual-self lies in His realization. The *Brahmasūtras* criticize and refute, in detail, the philosophies of the other Schools that contradict the Upaniṣads, discuss the means of salvation as available in them and give an account of the nature of *mokṣa* (emancipation) or the Result as disclosed in the Upaniṣad-texts. These *sūtras*, therefore, are the first human endeavour at building a coherent philosophical system out of the motley intuitions and logical thoughts disseminated throughout the Upaniṣadic literature. Though it appears from the evidences available in the *Brahmasūtras* that prior to them other teachers like Auḍulomi, Kārtsnakṛṣṇa, Bādari, Jaimini and Āśmarathya had their own views on different philosophical problems yet, as they are irretrievably lost to posterity for several historical reasons, it is only the *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa that has come down to us as the only philosophical system founded on the wisdom of the Upaniṣads.

The later teachers and philosophers, therefore, acknowledged these *sūtras* as the additional canon of authority besides the Upaniṣads and wrote commentaries thereon believing in right earnest that Bādarāyaṇa's formulations and interpretations, despite his own predilections, was a true vindication of Upaniṣadic thought. Besides the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra*, the third canon of authority of almost all the interpreters and commentators of Vedāntic philosophy is the *Bhagavadgītā*, which being told by Lord Kṛṣṇa is equal in authority and validity to the *śrutis*. To them, the *Gītā* is Upaniṣad itself; it is the most faithful commentary on the Upaniṣads. The later Ācāryas who intended to propound a system of philosophy, therefore, attempted at writing commentaries on all these three canons of authority for professing their claim to truth.

The *Bhagavadgītā*.

Upaniṣadic philosophy whose chief aim was to enquire about the foundational substratum behind the relative appearances of phenomena was conclusive about the existence of an Absolute Truth that projected both the subjective reality of Self and the external objective existence of Nature. To it both the cosmological and the subjective approaches pointed to the One immanent and transcendental Reality manifesting itself in different names and forms. The Absolute Reality was accepted to be the positive, though at times revealed in negative phraseology, and the general tendency of the philosophers was to consent to Its monistic character, a point recognised even by the later commentators of Vedānta. With the only exception of the Mādhva school almost all the Vedānta philosophers were in agreement that the *advaitic* character of Reality is the basic feature of Upaniṣadic teaching, the only point of difference being the nature and character of this Advaita. What specifically led to the divergence of opinion and was the point of departure is not the *advaitic* character of Reality but whether this Reality is character-less or attributive, whether it is impersonal or personal and how and in what relation does it stand to the multiplicity of phenomena, Should the multiplicity of name and form be taken as real? If so, how are they to be reconciled with the Absolute? If they are illusory, what about the individual-self which appears as the cogniser of the external-world? Any

Monistic character of Upaniṣadic Philosophy.

Divergence of opinion on the character of Advaita.

assertion about the illusory character of the individual-self would destroy the very foundation of the philosophy of devotion as an essential means to the attainment of salvation. And then, to whose salvation it would lead to if the individual-soul itself is illusory? And lastly, is the fact of creation real, or it too is illusory? If unreal, why should the Upaniṣads and the *Brahma-sūtra* define Brahman as the cause of the world-order? These are some of the important questions that led to the divergence of the philosophical views of the posterior thinkers and the system builders who gave different interpretations to the Upaniṣadic texts in support of their own philosophical convictions.

As we have mentioned elsewhere, Śaṁkara's advent [1] is an event of historic importance in the annals of Indian Philosophy and Religion inasmuch as he developed on the materials supplied by his predecessors a complete system of metaphysics and justified its credentials by explaining it to be the only correct interpretation of the Upaniṣadic-texts. In pursuance of the traditions of his own spiritual lineage, which probably extended beyond Gauḍapāda, he conceived of the Ultimate Reality — Brahman or Ātman — as one Indeterminate [2] whole whose nature as described in the Upaniṣads is Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. It is a unity whose comprehension in terms of the logical moulds of human intellect and the relative existence of phenomena is impossible. The real nature of Brahman is unknowable through intellect, is ineffable, relationless, partless and is without a second. Consciousness, which is an aspect of Brahman, is also non-relative, partless and attributeless. Though the nature of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, is inaccessible to intellect, It can be realised through supra-rational-experience (*Aparokṣānubhūti*) or the True Wisdom.

It is evident that in formulating the above conception of Reality Śaṁkara has attached primary importance to the *nirguṇa-śrutis* in comparison to those that describe Its character as full of infinite attributes, infinite knowledge, power and action, as a Being that is the source of origination, sustenance and destruction of world-order namely the *saguṇa-śrutis*. Throughout his commentaries on Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra* Śaṁkara seems to convey the impression that it is the *nirguṇa-śruti* that really imparts the true instruction about the real

1. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 1.
2. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 1.

nature of the Ultimate Reality and the *saguṇa-śrutis* are only secondary. The apparent contradiction between the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* led — for affecting a reconciliation between them — to Śaṁkara's conceptions of Para and Apara Brahman and his distinction between the *svarūpa* and the *taṭastha* forms of the definition of Brahman. In the same way, for him the scriptural texts that describe the Reality as One and without difference are superior to those that describe the manifold character of world and the reality of difference (*dvaita-śrutis*).

Śaṁkarite philosophy of Individual-soul.

Such a philosophy of Absolute naturally leads to the question as to what according to Śaṁkara is the nature of the individual-self that acts enjoys and suffers under the influence and pressure of Inconscient Nature? According to Śaṁkara, the real nature of the individual-soul is identical with Brahman and his appearance as jīvātman in association with the subtle and gross bodies is due to the false imposition of *avidyā*. In reality, there is only Brahman without a second and the world-phenomenon with manifold objects and individual-selves is an illusory imposition caused by the inexplicable principle of *ajñāna* or *māyā*. This *māyā* is responsible for the manifold appearance of both the subjective and the objective phenomena. But this should not lead us to the belief that it is a principle different from Brahman for this would then destroy the very conception of Śaṁkara's *advaita*. On the other hand, it would also be fallacious to equate it with Brahman; to consider *māyā* or *avidyā* as identical with Brahman would be to take its reality for granted and, thereby, negate all the possibilities of its removal. *Māyā* or *avidyā* is, therefore, *anirvacanīya* or different from both real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*). It is different from 'real' because it, along with the effects, is removed; it is different from 'unreal' because its effects are the objects of experience.

The Doctrine of *Māyā*.

The description of Brahman in the *śrutis* as the Omniscient and Omnipotent Being who is said to create, sustain and destroy the world is only with reference to Īśvara who when associated with the aspect of *māyā* known as *vikṣepa-śakti* projects the entire world. Creation for Śaṁkara, as for Gauḍapāda, has no truth because the concept of causality is itself phenomenal having no absolute or transcendental value. The jīvātman too has no absolute reality; Brahman when

associated with the aspect of *ajñāna* that has the predominance of the veiling power (*āvaraṇaśakti*) appears as jivātman or the individual-self. In its phenomenal appearance it forgets its identity with Brahman and its essential nature as truth, knowledge and bliss and considers itself as a transmigratory creature.

According to Śaṁkara, it is the individual soul's ignorance that is responsible for its bondage. He, therefore, repeatedly asserts that liberation is possible only through knowledge (*jñāna*) i.e., by comprehending that the real nature of *jīva* is not its physical or psychic apparatus but its nature as *saccidānanda*. In fact, the jīva is always infinite, immortal and ubiquitous; it is its idea about itself as finite and mortal that is the cause of its bondage. Because the individual-self is Brahman, there is, in truth, neither bondage nor release. Immortality, according to Śaṁkara, is thus not to be acquired but only to be realized. The solution of the problem of emancipation or *mokṣa* lies not in acquisition but in realization, a realization in which the soul shakes off all false notions about its individuality and difference from Brahman; the state of emancipation, therefore, is a positive state of identity with Brahman.

Śaṁkara on action and devotion.

Is there any utility and function of action (*karma*) and devotion (*bhakti*) in Śaṁkara's system in view of this position in which release is not at all an acquisition? To Śaṁkara they are necessary only for the purification of heart and acquisition of the four necessary preliminary means (*sādhana-catuṣṭaya*) to Self-knowledge. So long as a soul has not transgressed its relative and phenomenal existence it has to function on the *vyāvahārika* plane. Though from the transcendental or *pāramārthika* standpoint all difference is an illusion yet as long as one has not realized Brahman the *vyavahāra* with all the difference available in a knowledge-situation, i.e., the subject, the object and the cognition, has a reality. This is why he introduces the conception of *vyāvahārika-sattā* (pragmatic reality) in his doctine of the three orders of reality as against only the two, the *samvṛti* and *paramārtha*, of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

To those steeped in the Bhāgavata and the Pāñcarātra culture, Śaṁkara's philosophy, as explicated above, has been a source of deep distress and abhorrence as its philosophical formulations seem to destroy

Common features of Āgamika Schools.

the very foundations on which the edifice of this religion and culture is based. As observed by Dr. M. Narasimghāchāry, "the *āgamika*[1] schools have many common features, such as (a) the existence of a Supreme Being with a predominant male or female aspect, (b) the existence of individual souls, (c) the reality of the objective universe and (d) efficacy of unflinching devotion to the Deity in effecting salvation, expressed in the worship of the idols of the Deity." Śaṁkara's peculiar interpretation of the Upaniṣads in its final analysis goes to establish that all these convictions are, from the ultimate standpoint, utterly humbug. Though to some the Vedic and the Upaniṣadic tradition, with its emphasis on *karma* and *jñāna* is indicative of a spiritual current different from that of the *Sātvata* and Pāñcarātra culture — which had in the earlier centuries of the Christian era witnessed a furious con-troversy raged over the question whether the Āgamas are non-Vedic and, therefore, unauthoritative or not — yet "both the Vedas, and therefore the Upaniṣads, and the Āgamas are two different streams of thought running in two parallel channels acting and reacting upon each other so as to ultimately blend together indistinguishably." Śaṁkara himself was not sympathetically disposed towards the Pāñcarātra Āgamas. In the relevant section on his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* he has levelled the charge that the Pāñcarātra - texts which speak of the origination of the jīva should be treated as non-Vedic, indirectly suggesting the non-Vedic source of inspiration of all those who have been enamoured by the devotional and the amorous approach and the sensitivities of the Pāñcarātrins. The followers and the adherents of the Pāñcarātra and other Āgamas, therefore, first of all, tried to repudiate the charge that they are non-Vedic — Yāmunācārya's famous *Āgamaprāmāṇya* is an attempt in this direction — and then they set on foot to establish that the philosophy and religion as conceived and preached by them is the only correct appraisal of the Upaniṣadic thought by writing commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra* whose own synthesis and interpretation of the Upaniṣads was at times favourable

Pāñcarātra Āgamas – their validity.

1. Narasimghachary, Dr. M. : *Āgamaprāmāṇya of Yāmunācārya*. Introductory Study, p. 6.

to and harmonious with the general tenure of Āgamika philosophy and speculation.

Four sects of Vaiṣṇavite Religion – their common standpoints.

The four different sects of Vaiṣṇavite Religion, namely, the Śrī, the Brahma, the Hamsa and the Rudra—named after their originators who were the devotees of Viṣṇu — had Viśiṣṭādvaita (Qualified Monism) of Rāmānuja, Dvaita (Pluralistic Vedānta) of Mādhva, Dvaitādvaita of Nimbārka and Śuddhādvaita (Pure Monism) of Vallabhācārya as their cardinal doctrines. Notwithstanding their differences in approach and their formulations about the nature of the Ultimate Reality, Its relation to world and individual souls, these systems demonstrated explicit identity of views on many questions of philosophical importance. First of all they maintained that Reality is not an indeterminate Whole but is a Concrete Personal Absolute full of infinite divine qualities out of which the six attributes of Aiśvarya [1] (Omnipotence), Vīrya (potency of goodness), Yaśas (sanctifying excellence), Śrī (beauty and attractiveness of form and spirit), Jñāna (omniscience) and Vairāgya (non-attachment in all cosmic activities) are generally referred to on account of their prominence. The Absolute Reality of God is the ultimate cause of world-origination, sustenance and destruction and while He creates the world out of His own wish (this creation is a manifestation) He also rules over it by being the Inner Lord. The second point of agreement is the reality of creation; unless the creation itself is real all talk about the existence of souls, the importance of scriptural testimony, the utility of devotion and surrender to God, the aspiration after salvation etc. would be meaningless. The third common point is about the nature of the individual soul which is both the doer and the enjoyer on the world-scene. The soul, to all of them, is an eternal and conscious principle and appears like sparks from a blazing fire. They also agree on the point that the dimension of the jīva is always atomic (*aṇu*) and not all-pervasive as asserted in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. The jīvas are infinite in number and different from each other and also from the Supreme Divinity (if not actually then manifestly). The fourth identical standpoint is their reverence to devotion as the ultimate means

1. Swami Tapasyananda : *Nārāyaṇīyam*, p. XXX.

of human liberation. It is devotion and self-surrender that invokes the Benediction of the Lord who emancipates the devotee from the clutches of earthly bondage. And last, but not the least important, is the joint chorus of disparagements against Śaṁkara and his followers which they have undertaken, at times, with a vindictive spirit, to the extent of using scurrilous language in their criticisms and it is no wonder that Śaṁkarite philosophy occurs to be the main *pūrvapakṣa* (the opponent's view) in the commentaries of the Vaiṣṇavite thinkers. Despite these similarities, the different philosophies of the Vaiṣṇavite schools held divergent views on the nature of the Ultimate Reality and Its relation to world and individual souls. At times the idea of *bhakti* itself was a point of controversy; some of the sects considered it to be only a sort of meditative recollection whereas others, stressing upon its emotional side, urged that transcendental love towards God was the true nature and description of devotion.

Common revolt against Śaṁkara.

Though the Vaiṣṇavite ācāryas — Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka and Vallabha — upheld different philosophical positions on numerous important problems yet they were unanimous in their contention and belief that Śaṁkara's emphasis on *nirguṇa-śrutis* was quite excessive and totally unwarranted. As *śrutis* (scriptural-texts) the *saguṇa*-texts describing Brahman as personal, full of infinite attributes etc. are as much valid as the *nirguṇa* ones and there is no justification, whatsoever, in differentiating them as primary and secondary. Śaṁkara's distinction between *Para* and *Apara* Brahman which is a consequence of his conviction that the *nirguṇa*-texts are superior to those of the *saguṇa*-texts is equally meaningless. If the philosophy of Personal God and His infinite attributes and determinations can satisfactorily explain the world-order, what is the use of maintaining an Indeterminate, Immutable and Non-differentiated Absolute? What the Upaniṣads really intend by calling Brahman as *nirguṇa* is to assert that His divine attributes transcend the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*; they do not mean a blanket denial of all attribution to God. The Determinate and the Indeterminate are only two aspects of the same Ultimate Reality and it is redundant to contend that the one is higher and the other is lower. Similarly, it is also preposterous to contend that the scriptural-texts referring to identity are superior in validity to those that are assertive of duality.

Rāmānuja's philosophy – the Viśiṣṭādvaita system.

Rāmānuja was the first thinker of repute to raise the high banner of revolt against Śaṁkara's philosophy of Absolute Monism. Though in deference to the Upaniṣadic teaching that Reality is only one, he was certain about the monistic character of Reality yet he had serious reservations about the philosophy of Its indeterminate character. To him, the Ultimate Reality is a Concrete Absolute with infinite attributes containing in Its Body the conscious souls (*cit*) and the Inconscient Primordial Matter (*acit*). During the course of creation these two separate principles, the *cit* and the *acit*, appear in their gross form but during the state of dissolution they may be in their subtle form and subsist within the Body of Brahman. Thus Brahman in the system of Rāmānuja is qualified by *cit* and *acit* and this is why this philosophical system is known as Viśiṣṭādvaita or Qualified Monism.

The advantages of the Viśistādvaita system in providing sure foundations for theism in contrast to Śaṁkara's Advaita Vedānta are numerous. It recognises the existence of individual souls as different from both the Brahman and the *Prakṛti* and also different among themselves inspite of the fact that they are, by nature, conscious, eternal, partless, self-illumined and super-sensuous. The *Prakṛti* or the *acit* is a separate principle in itself which is responsible for the creation of the whole universe which serves as objects to the knowledge and activity of the jīvas. Notwithstanding their separation, the *cit* and the *acit* being included in the Absolute's Organism are governed by Him who as an inner-ruler (*antaryāmin*) is permanently present in all their states. The existence of Brahman as the substratum is the cause of their regulated inter-dependence; they both depend on Brahman which is the only independent reality in all three *tattvas* of Rāmānuja-Vedānta viz., the *Īśvara*, the *jīva* and the *Prakṛti*. Rāmānuja conceives that the material-cause of the world is *Prakṛti* but because *Prakṛti* is included within the body of Brahman He is generally referred to as the material-cause of world in the Upaniṣads. Similarly, the Will (*saṁkalpa*) of Brahman serves the purpose of instrumental causality. Thus, according to Viśiṣṭādvaita, Brahman is both the material and the instrumental cause of world-creation which is real and not illusory as propagated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta.

The reality of the individual self and its status as the doer and the enjoyer prepares a sure ground for the philosophy of devotion

(*bhakti*) and self-surrender as the ultimate means of human emancipation. As bondage is a real phenomenon, its removal is possible only by God's Grace and not by knowledge alone. Thus Rāmānuja built up a philosophical system which was true to the main spirit of the Pāñcarātra Āgamas and continued to vouchsafe its validity by seeking its justification on the basis of Upaniṣadic texts.

Rāmānuja's shortcomings.

Notwithstanding Rāmānuja's dexterity in seeking a logical justification for his Qualified Monism, the system leaves in its trail many contradictions which his doctrine could never avoid. Despite his sincere efforts, Rāmānuja failed to establish how both *cit* (soul) and *acit* (matter) can exist in a single Whole — the Brahman. As a matter of fact, Rāmānuja's concept of Brahman is a synthetic Whole that can assimilate all its parts in Itself. His Brahman is like a human person whose body is formed by the two opposite principles, the conscious (*jīva*) and the unconscious (*Prakṛti*) but the inclusion of two opposite principles like light and darkness in a unitary body is not only self-contradictory but fantastic. The analogy from a human being in whom both the conscious soul and the inconscient body subsist under the governance of the Inner Ruler, the *antaryāmin*, is no sufficient explanation of the ultimate nature of Being; the fact of human existence itself is a phenomenon for further enquiry and, therefore, should not be accepted as a basis for explaining the relation between the three principles of the *cit*, the *acit* and the Brahman.

Further let us ask Rāmānuja : Are the individual souls, and Primordial Matter identical with or different form Brahman? He would at once reply that they are both identical and different. But if we subject the concepts of identity and difference to an acute logical analysis it would appear that this concept is, in itself, invalid, From the ultimate standpoint things are either identical or different; the concept of identity and difference has no doubt a value in the practical life of man but when we subject our concepts to a logical and metaphysical enquiry the concept of identity and difference, as an ultimate metaphysical fact, crumbles like a house of cards. Thus we have to face a disjunctive proposition that the individual souls and Primordial Matter are either identical with or different from Brahman. The former would ultimately lead to The Śaṁkarite position, where as the latter would demolish Rāmānuja's

advaita in favour of pure-*dvaita* where God, the individual soul and the matter are all absolutely different. The force of this argument weighed so much with Madhva that he was led to the conviction that recognition of 'difference' as an ultimate category and pluralism as the final and the essential nature of Being is the sheet-anchor for the justification of theism and *bhakti* as the ultimate means for the emancipation of soul. The acute dialectical sense of Madhva and his followers, who probably were the most logical of all the Vaiṣṇavite thinkers, convinced them that Pluralism of the Real is the ultimate fact. The concept of identity and difference is only a half-way house for the resuscitation of multiplicity whose very existence has been destroyed by Śaṁkara and his followers.

Mādhva Philosophy.

Madhva's philosophy, therefore, is a powerful defence of difference which, according to him, is of five kinds, viz., that between God and soul, between God and Matter, between Matter and soul and between one soul and another soul and between one matter and another matter; all the differences are absolutely real. Madhva's system being essentially dualistic in character and realistic in approach, formulates the absolute reality of the manifold existents and their relations in world. For Madhva every fact that comes under the purview of experience is always real; it is, however, another matter that the duration of its existence may make it 'eternal' or 'non-eternal'.

In Mādhva philosophy, which is the cardinal doctrine of the 'Brahma' sect of Vaiṣṇavism, we have two types of substances, viz., Independent and Dependent. God is the only Independent Substance whereas, all other entities including the individual souls depend on Him for their existence. The idea of independence here is not a substitute for eternality because there are substances that are dependent and yet eternal, e.g., *Prakṛti*.

The world is a real creation of God who creates it out of the Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*). Brahman is only the instrumental-cause of creation, whereas, *Prakṛti* is its material-cause. It is not only for its creation that the world depends on Īśvara but also for its sustenance, destruction and control; the knowledge, ignorance, bondage and release of the jīvas is also controlled by Him. The individual soul, according to Madhva, is not Brahman but a part of Brahman and his nature as consciousness and bliss is similar to that of the Lord. The ignorance

of the jīva about its real nature and the nature of Paramātman, who is full of infinite and virtuous qualities, is responsible for its bondage. As such the right knowledge about the nature of God is instrumental in man's salvation. But here knowledge is not the ultimate means for the attainment of *mokṣa*. Bondage being real cannot be destroyed merely by knowledge. It can be removed only when God so wishes and it is His benediction that is the ultimate instrument for release. Knowledge has its utility only in invoking the blessings of Īśvara. But without devotion (*bhakti*) and complete self-surrender (*prapatti*) the acquisition of true knowledge is impossible because in Mādhva philosophy true knowledge can be acquired only when God reveals Himself to His devotee. Thus the real means of liberation consists in surrendering oneself completely to God and acquiring knowledge about Him so that He may, by showering His blessings, liberate the devotee from all sorrows and sufferings. During the highest state of *mokṣa*, the *sāyujya*, in which the liberated soul retains its individuality, it acquires a similarity with the *svarūpa* of the Paramātman and enjoys the very *bhogas* that are enjoyed by Him.

Bhedābheda philosophy of Nimbārka.

The representative philosophical doctrine of the Haṁsa sect of Vaiṣṇavism is the *bhedābhedavāda* of the Nimbārka School. According to this theory, the nature of the Ultimate Reality is both 'identity' and 'difference'. As there are *śrutis* assertive of both identity and difference it would be prudent to accept the compromising position that the Ultimate Reality or Brahman is at once identical with and different from the world of conscious-spirits and matter. Like all other Vaiṣṇavites, Nimbāraka also rejects any classification of the *śrutis* as primary and secondary. As all the Upaniṣad-texts are of equal validity *bhedābheda* is the only philosophy which truly represents and explains the real purport of the Upaniṣads specially when other thinkers of repute, in the Post Śaṁkarite period, lent their support to the validity of this view. But what is meant by identity here and how can both 'identity' and 'difference' be co-extensive? "By *identity*, here, is meant that the existence, activities etc., of the individual self are all dependent upon the Lord. In the case of non-conscious reality also, when it is said 'sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahman' (indeed all this is Brahman) what it means is that the whole non-conscious reality comes out of Him."[1]

1. Mishra, U. : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 51.

It is this dependence on the Ultimate Reality or Kṛṣṇa — as professed in this school — that constitutes the meaning of identity of the universe with Brahman. The conscious and unconscious existence are thus both identical with and different from Him just as the lustre of a ruby, though not different from ruby, is yet in form different from it or just as the waves of ocean though identical with it are all the same different in form as 'waves'. *Bhedābheda* is, therefore, the very nature of Ultimate Reality and this is why this doctrine has been named in this system as '*Svābhāvika-bhedābheda-vāda*'.

Difference from Bhāskara.

It may, however, be observed that though the philosophy of identity and difference was propagated much earlier by Bhāskarācārya also yet because his explanation of difference was based on the concept of real *upādhi* (limitative adjunct) as creative of this difference it laid greater emphasis and significance on unity than diversity. Nimbārka, on the other hand, by his explanation of the meaning of identity (abheda) as dependence on Paramātman allowed equal and full status and reality to 'difference'. He, as such, categorically asserted that the philosophies of both Śaṁkara and Madhva professing absolute unity and absolute difference, respectively, of the world with Brahman were a gross misrepresentation of the real purpose of the Upaniṣadic texts.

Like Madhva, Nimbārka also believed that Reality is of two kinds, viz., Independent (*Svatantra*) and Dependent (*Paratantra*). Parabrahman or God alone is the Independent Reality whereas all others are dependent. The Dependent reality is further classified into two, viz., the conscious and the unconscious. The individual self (jīvātman) is the only dependent-conscious reality whereas the non-conscious is of three kinds, the Aprākṛta, the Prākṛta and Kāla (time).

The Paramātman or Brahman, according to this system also, is neither indeterminate nor quality-less. He is positive, perfect, eternal and consists of infinite attributes. Though His powers are unthinkable and infinite, His nature is generally described in the Upaniṣads as consisting of Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss. Like Rāmānuja and other Vaiṣṇavites Nimbārka makes a special mention of His six qualities that are used for creating the universe, viz., knowledge, power, strength, supremacy, energy and prowess. All His qualities are natural and eternal to Him. He is omnipresent, omniscient,

unmanifest as well as manifest. He is the source of all creation; this is why the Upaniṣads speak of Him as the material and the instrumental cause of all cosmic creation. The mere Will of the Lord creates an unrest in His infinite dormant power and initiates the creative - process. It is an example of His Majesty and Greatness that even when the process of world-creation continues His nature remains unaffected and undisturbed. Keśava Kāśmīrī, a great exponent of this school, contends that this is possible only because this transformation relates only to the disturbance of powers and not to the inherent nature of God (*śaktivikṣepātmaka*). Not only is the Lord the instrumental and material cause of the world-order but He is also its governor and controller by being the inner soul of all that exists (*antaryāmin*). As contended in the *Gītā*, "He dwells in the hearts of all beings and by His illusive power (*māyā*) causes all beings to revolve as though mounted on a wheel." He is the Whole (*aṁśī*) to which the individual souls belong as a part (*aṁśa*). He is all-pervasive, indestructible (*akṣara*) and free from all evils. Though His unlimited and blissful nature is unmanifested to ordinary means of cognition, which the mortals of this earth possess, yet He by His own Will and Grace can manifest Himself to one who possesses extraordinary devotion and has undergone austere penances. He is the dispenser of the results of all the good and bad deeds done by men.

What is interesting about the Nimbārkian exposition of the nature of God is their contention that the Lord possesses a body which like His Divine Nature is the substrate of unlimited infinite and divine qualities. It is a body of pure *sattva* which manifests every kind of excellence of beauty and all unearthly qualities. It is because He possesses a body that the *śruti* speaks of the colour of His hair as golden. Apart from other qualities He also possesses *rūpa* (colour); but His colour is not a product of Primordial Matter. The reference in the *śrutis* that God is without *rūpa* (arūpaṁ) is only a denial of the existence of natural colour or *prākṛta rūpa* in Him and not a complete negation of all attributes including the celestial and transcendental ones.

Among the dependent realities, the individual-soul (*jīva*) is the only conscious principle. As in other Vaiṣṇavite Schools, the jīva, in this system also, is atomic, is the object of 'I - consciousness', and

is the substratum of knowledge. Though consciousness is the very nature of the individual soul, yet it is also treated as an attribute with the result that the jīvātman is recognised to be both *jñānasvarūpa* and *jñānāśraya*. "Both of these are possible simply because they believe that identity does not depend upon the absolute resemblance or sameness between the *dharmin* and the *dharma* but upon the non-apprehension of difference."[1] Knowledge in this system is acknowledged as the quality of the soul. Notwithstanding the atomic character of jīva, knowledge as quality pervades the whole body like the fragrance of the mark of sandalwood- paste on forehead. It is because of the all-pervasive character of knowledge which is the attribute of the jīva that it is sometimes erroneously considered as *vibhu* (ubiquitous). The jīvas by nature are eternal and owe their existence to Paramātman. As explicitly declared both in the *Gītā* and the *Brahmasūtra*, they are the *aṁśas* (potency) of the Lord. The term *aṁśa* is used in the Nimbārka-literature in the sense of potency and not in the sense of a part, a spark or a reflection. Thus being the *aṁśa* it is different from Brahman, the *aṁśī*. On the other hand, as it is always dependent upon Īśvara for its existence and activities — for He alone causes all the activities to be performed by the souls — it is also identical, i.e., not distinct from Him. Thus the relation between jīva and Brahman, in this system, is one of identity and difference (*bhedābheda*).

The individual soul is also the real doer of actions and the enjoyer of its results. Though, in reality, it is the Lord who is the real doer of all actions, for all practical purposes, the doer-ship has been transferred to the individual soul.

If the jīva is an *aṁśa*, has it been created at some point of time? The Nimbārka School emphatically asserts that the soul is unborn and uncreated though under the force of its past beginningless deeds or *māyā* it has to undergo several births till it is emancipated by the Grace of God. *Māyā* or *avidyā*, in this system, is used in the sense of past deeds or karma and not in the sense of delusion or illusory appearance. Due to the influence of *māyā*, the individual soul is associated with *Prakṛti* and its products in the form of gross and subtle bodies and is thus subjected to bondage. When by intensive devotion and self-surrender to Lord, he obtains His Grace, he is delivered from

1. Mishra, U. : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 41.

the shackles of bondage. During the state of emancipation the liberated souls manifest their nature as consciousness and such other attributes as omniscience, omnipotence, freedom from evil and the influence of *Prakṛti*. In fact, the Nimbārkists emphasize that the realization of the true nature of the Lord accompanied by freedom from causal influence of *Prakṛti* is the real nature of emancipation. However, in the later works of this School realization of the true nature of Self is also included in the concept of *mukti* which is attainable only through the Grace of God.

The non-conscious entities are of three kinds, viz., *Aprākṛta* (not belonging to *Prakṛti* or Primordial Matter), *Prākṛta* (belonging to *Prakṛti*) and Kāla (Time). The *Aprākṛta* form of unconscious-matter is unlimited and beyond the operation of the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. It is of the nature of pure *sattva*; it is the element out of which the place, the means and objects of the experience of the Lord, when He so wishes, and the liberated souls are formed. This special form of the non-conscious matter is referred to in Vaiṣṇavite literature by such names as *Param-vyoma, Viṣṇupada, Paramapada, Brahmaloka* etc. *Prakṛti* is the substrate of the three guṇas and all its products are known as *prākṛta*; it is known by such different names as *Māyā, Pradhāna, Tamas, Avyakta, Śakti* etc. As in the Sāṁkhya system, it is the state of equilibrium of the three *guṇas*. It is said to be eternal but as effect it is non-eternal. It is changing and being His *śakti* (power) it is always dependent on the Lord. Unlike the Sāṁkhya system *Prakrti* to Nimbārka and other Vaiṣṇavites is always dependent upon and relative to the Will of the Lord. Kāla is the third variety of unconscious matter. It is eternal and ubiquitous; It has neither beginning nor end. "It is the instumental cause of creation and dissolution and the material cause of the various notions of time, such as *paramāṇu* etc. That much of time which the sun takes to cross the space occupied by a *paramāṇu* is called atomic-time."[1] It is also dependent on the Lord.

On the problem of causality Nimbārka is the protagonist of the Sāṁkhya doctrine of *satkāryavāda* according to which the effect prior to its manifestation always exists in the cause in a nascent form. Paramātman is both the cause and the effect. All the conscious and the non-conscious entities of the cosmos with their different names

1. Mishra, U. : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 93.

and forms are His effects and as such He is spoken of in the *śrutis* as the material cause of the universe; the universe though distinct (being effect) is, therefore, not entirely different from Him. As both the cause and the effect are identical, the universe, though appearing as different and distinct, is identical with its cause, the Brahman. Thus the Nimbārkists maintain the essential *bhedābheda* between Brahman and the Cosmos.

The Nimbārkian *Bhedābheda.*

From the above exposition of Nimbārka's philosophy it may appear that notwithstanding his emphasis on *bhedābheda* the ultimate complexion of Reality is predominantly dualistic. An examination and analysis of this concept would reveal that the *bhedābheda* view ascribes to things their identity and difference on account of cretain qualities which they possess. What are these specific determinations [1] that prove the identity and difference of things? Are they identical or different? The former would prove that the specific determinations of identity and difference are the same; in other words, there would be either identiy or difference between things and no 'identity and difference' (*bhedābheda*). With regard to the latter position it may be asked : What is the relation between the determining character and their substrates? Are they identical or different or both identical and different? The first two alternatives are, however, inadmissible because no substance-attribute-relation is conceivable between things that are either completely identical or completely different. The only possible relation between 'substance' and 'attribute' is that of identity and difference. The position, in the end, is that the specific characters distinguishing the identity and difference of things get related to their substrates in such a way that they are both identical and different. A repetition of this logic would ultimately lead to the fallacy of infinite regress and would disclose that the doctrine of *bhedābheda* is no better explanation of the relation between the Cosmos and its Cause, the Ultimate Reality; this relation has either to be full-fledged unity (*advaita*) or a downright thorough-going plurality (*dvaita*). The Nimbārkists themselves are conscious of this paradox in as much as they appear to be interested in defending the *dvaita* than formulating the defence

1. Narain, K.,: *A Critique of Mādhva Refultation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 185.

of the *advaita* (unity) aspect of this theory. The interpretation of the meaning of *advaita* as dependence on Paramātman for existence and activity is a low-keyed and half-hearted defence probably out of the fear of violating *śrutis* that assert the unitary character of the Ultimate Reality (*advaita-śrutis*).

The Rudra-sect of Vaiṣṇavism is, therefore, dissatisfied with the philosophical exposition of the nature and constitution of the Ultimate Reality as undertaken in three schools of Rāmānuja, Madhva and Nimbārka. Though for diverse and obvious reasons this sect is also a protagonist of the reality of 'difference' and the world-phenomenon yet it has a settled conviction about the unitary character of Truth and a belief that the *advaita-śrutis* such as '*Ekamevādvitīyaṁ*' (the reality is one and non-dual) should not be violated. Viṣṇusvāmin is said to be the first propounder of this School but as very little is known about the history of his thought and his philosophical position the real propounder of this system — known as Śuddhādvaita or Brahmavāda — is acknowledged to be Śrī Vallabhācārya on whom the mantle of Viṣṇusvāmin had ultimately fallen. The life of Vallabhācārya records the anecdote that he was instructed by Lord Kṛṣṇa to formulate and expound the doctrine of Brahmavāda and correct the mistakes of the earlier masters. This anecdote, at least, justifies the assumption that Vallabha had a pre-vision about the fallacious representation of the philosophic truth of the Upaniṣads and the real meaning and purport of these texts at the hands of all other commentators of the *Brahma-sūtras.* Besides being convinced of the monistic character of the Ultimate Reality he has the vision that the Cosmos too is Brahman as declared in the *śruti*, 'Sarvaṁkhalvidaṁ Brahman' (Truly, all this is Brahman) and not an illusory appearance caused by *Māyā* as propagated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. To Vallabha the philosophy of the unreality of world is as fallacious as the Śaṁkarite contention that Brahman or Ultimate Reality is an indeterminate, quality-less and impersonal Whole. For various reasons, to be elaborated in the successive chapters of this book, Vallabha was convinced that the Ultimate Reality is just the opposite; It is determinate, qualified and personal. Though Rāmānuja, Madhva and others also made an attempt in this direction yet Vallabha felt that the nature and

Vallabha's dissatisfaction – exposition of Brahmavādā.

constitution of Brahman as conceived by them did not represent the real *advaita* as contemplated by the Upaniṣadic seers. He, therefore, propounded a system on the basis of the four canons of authority, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhāgavata* which is known as Śuddhādvaita or Brahmavāda. Apart from this philosophic exposition, Vallabha and his followers have the rare distinction of raising *bhakti* to that supreme status in which it is both the means and the end. They introduced an absolutely novel conception of *Bhakti*, known as *Puṣṭi*, and emphasised that it is superior to the one already known, i.e., the *Maryādā Bhakti* or Scriptural Devotion. Due to the paramount importance of *puṣṭi-bhakti* and the emphasis laid on it in Śrī Vallabha's philosophy, his philosophico-religious system is usually called '*the Puṣṭi-mārga*'.

The term 'Śuddhādvaita' is interpreted in the Vāllabha School in two ways [1] : (1) Firstly, on the basis of *karmadhāraya-samāsa* it means a non-duality (*advaita*) which is pure implying that this system has been purified and is now devoid of the conception of *Māyā* of the Śāṁkara School. The Brahman of Vallabha is pure, is of the nature of both cause and effect and is unrelated to *Māyā* as interpreted by Śaṁkara and his followers. (2) Secondly, it may, as *ṣaṣṭhītatpuruṣa*, mean the non-duality of the two pure principles, viz., the individual souls and Inconscient Nature which are essentially one with Brahman. In whatever way we may interpret this term, the system stands for the ultimate reality of a pure Brahman uncontaminated by the dubious and inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) principle of *Māyā*. Brahman is both the cause and the effect; It is the world-phenomenon as well as its material and efficient cause. In other words, as the *śruti* contends, 'All this is Brahman'.[2] The cosmos is only an aspect of Brahman just as the coiled posture is only an aspect of the snake. This, according to Vallabha, is the real Brahmavāda or the philosophy of Brahman and not the one associated with the conception of *Māyā* as in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. The world-phenomenon, inclusive of both the conscious-souls and Inconscient Nature is, therefore, as real as Brahman without any suggestion of its unreality.

The Brahman.

1. Giradhar : *Śuddhādvaitamārtanda*, ślokas (27 and 28).
2. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 14, 1)

But then, what is the nature of this non-dual Brahman? Should it be indeterminate, attributeless, homogeneous, Whole, i.e., the undifferentiated continuum of the Śāṁkara School? The reply of Vallabha to this question is a definite 'No'. Like Rāmānuja, Madhva and other Vaiṣṇavites he is vehemently opposed to any conception of Brahman which considers It as indeterminate and bereft of attributes. To him, Brahman is essentially qualified by attributes, is perfect and is unlimited by time and space. Not only is Brahman the substrate of qualities, He is also the ground and substratum of contradictory qualities as demonstrated by innumerable *śrutis*. The Upaniṣadic-texts refer to Him as all-pervasive and atomic, as invisible and attainable by intellect, as existing externally as well as internally, as independent and dependent (on the wish of the devotee), as adopting various forms for His divine play while at the same time remaining essentially immutable and with various other contradictory attributes. All these statements, according to Vallabha, demonstrate that Brahman is the ground of contradictory attributes. As we shall discuss, in detail, in the chapters of this book, the existence of contradictory qualities in Brahman who transcends all categories of human intellect is no flaw; on the other hand. it represents His Greatness. Glory and Excellence in transcending all logical moulds of thought. This specific character of Brahman, as the substratum of contradictory and opposed qualities forms part of His very essence and is not at all illusory.

The nature of Brahman, as disclosed in the *śrutis*, is Pure Existence (*sat*). Pure Consciousness (*cit*) and Pure Bliss (*ānanda*). What differentiates Him from other existents, such as the individual soul and inconscient matter is His character as possessing eternal and infinite bliss, a quality which is veiled both in the soul (*jīva*) and nature. He is perfect, omniscient, omnipotent and eternal and is the repository of unlimited divine qualities; yet, out of these, knowledge (*jñāna*) and activity (*kriyā*) are the most prominent. He is the material cause as well as the efficient cause of the whole universe. He is the real doer (*kartṛ*) and enjoyer (*bhoktṛ*); it is He who propels the individual soul to act in a particular way and then enjoy its fruits. Even then He is not open to the charge of practising cruelty and creating inequality because, as the Vallabhites contend, He has created the world out of

Himself by way of mere sport. By the process of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) and concealment (*tirobhāva*) He creates and destroys world-order out of His own Self like the spider's web. But despite this transformation His own essential and real nature remains immutable and is never subject to any modification whatsoever; this special feature of Vallabhite philosophy is known as the doctrine of *avikṛtapariṇāmavāda*. The whole world is His eternal sport (*līlā*).

Manifestation of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* from *Akṣara*.

When, in Brahman, there arises the desire to be many there appears His special form, the Immutable or the Akṣara Brahman, which is next and lower to Him and is the cause of the whole causal-chain of the universe. It is from this Akṣara Brahman that there is a successive appearance of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* (individual soul). Though this Akṣara is a form of Para Brahman or Puruṣottama, the Ultimate Reality, yet It is lower to the latter for the reason that the magnitude if Its bliss-content is less than that of Puruṣottama whose Bliss is absolutely unlimited, As we shall discuss in the chapters of this work, it is the magnitude of the manifestation of bliss that, according to this School, is the real determinate of the superior position of the different existents. The Akṣara Brahman, in which due to the predominance of the pure *sattva* the bliss-aspect is considerably concealed, appears differently to the *jñānīs* and the *bhaktas*. To the *jñānīs* it appears as the *saccidānanda* transcending all space and time, self-revealed and beyond the *guṇas* of the *Prakṛti* but to the *bhaktas* It is all-pervading Vaikuṇṭha in which some of the important attributes of the Lord are manifest.

Along with the Akṣara, there appear three other forms from Brahman, viz., Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva, which though inseparable from Him, serve the purpose of world-creation consisting of twenty-eight *tattvas*. "But though Akṣara, Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva exist even before the creation of the universe, they are not included in the list of the *tattvas* as they are the general-causes inseparable from the Lord".

When in the Ultimate Reality of Para Brahman, which is conceived in the Vallabhite system as an Attributive and Personal Absolute, there manifests a will to be many, He out of mere sport projects Himself by concealing His Delight, into the innumerable forms of individual souls.

Thus through Brahman's desire to be many there emanate from Him, like sparks from a blazing fire, countless atomic conscious parts (*aṁśas*) known as the individual souls (*jīvas*). These souls are by nature *sat* (existence) and *cit* (consciousness) and though they are the *aṁśas* of Brahman yet their bliss is almost completely concealed. As soon as the jīva is separated from the Akṣara-Brahman, the *pure-sattva*, which is associated with this form of Brahman, gets dissected and is finally associated with the jīva and causes the concealment of its blissful nature. At this stage, the soul is an atomic aspect of Brahman, unconditioned, conscious in nature yet without its essential attribute — the Bliss. In the beginning of creation, during this stage, there is only the concealment of bliss and no further concealment of Brahman's other six qualities, viz., *Aiśvarya, Yaśaṣ, Śrī, Jñāna* and *Vairāgya*. Later on. due to the will of God or Para Brahman, these six divine attributes are also concealed and the soul is endowed with such contradictory attributes as dependence, submissiveness, attachment to mundane objects, the feeling of ego, ignorance, false knowledge and the capacity to tolerate pain. Though these are not the essential attributes of the individual soul yet the concealment of the six divine and transcendent qualities — which the jīva as the *aṁśa* of Brahman obtains from Him — causes them to appear and it becomes a phenomenal and transmigratory creature.

One may, however, wonder if such an explanation of the creation of soul (*jīva*) may not be open to the charge that the jīva in this system is created and; therefore, non-eternal. But the Vallabhites decry this argument by contending that this concept of the creation of soul is not associated with any idea of productivity; instead, it only points to the fact that all souls have their source in Brahman. The soul is, therefore, as eternal as Brahman and is never created and destroyed.

Soul's atomic dimension.

Another point of importance in the Vallabhite theory of the individual-soul is their agreement with other Vaiṣṇavite schools that the soul is atomic in dimension and not all-pervasive (*vibhu*) as contended in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. Yet their explanation of this concept exhibits a sense of dissimilarity with other systems of Vaiṣṇavism. To the Vallabhites the disappearance or concealment of bliss is the cause of the non-manifestation of the ubiquitous character of jīva and its

rendering as atomic. As such though the jīva in its phenomenal nature is atomic yet when by the Grace of God the aspect of delight is manifested in him he becomes all-pervasive. Though the soul is atomic in its phenomenal and mundane existence yet during the course of its union with Brahman it acquires the character of all-pervasive-ness. The Vallabhites also classify 'the jīvas as eternally liberated (*nitya-mukta*), liberated (after going through the *saṁsāra*) and related to phenomenal-world as done by the other system of Vaiṣṇavism. Yet they introduce another classification : they classify the jīvas as *maryādāmārgins* and the *puṣṭimārgins*. We shall, however, discuss these points, in detail, in the relevant chapters of this book. The real cause of the bondage of the jīva is the suppression of the blissful-aspect and wrong knowledge about himself and the world which he so acquires. Knowledge to the Vallabhites is also an attribute of the soul.

Soul as *aṁśa* of Brahman.

It is thus obvious that as the jīva is an *aṁśa* of Brahman, the *aṁśī*, there subsists a relation of identity between them but because the character of bliss is concealed in the individual soul with its consequent results and whereas in Brahman this Delight is overbrimmingly manifested there is naturally a difference between the two. As long as the soul is in its jīva-hood, it is different from Brahman but when by devotion and His Grace the inherent delight of the soul is manifested and it acquires a similarity with Him it is said to be identical with Brahman. Thus the Vallabhites while maintaining the relation of identity (*tādātmya*) between the Cosmos — including the individual soul — and Brahman are prone to recognise the existence of difference between Brahman and Its manifestations — the individual souls and the Inconscient Nature.

Character of Inconscient Nature.

As regards the question of the nature and character of the Inconscient Universe the Vallabhites are the votaries of its real existence like other Vaiṣṇavites. The cosmos too is a posture of Brahman in which He, as per His Will, conceals both the *cit* (consciousness) and the *ānanda* (bliss) aspects; as a result in the inconscient universe there is only the manifestation of Brahman's Existence. This is not to contend that the non-conscious universe is completely bereft of the *cit* and *ānanda* aspects but only that these two aspects

have been concealed by Brahman's *tirobhāva-śakti* (power of concealment). Thus the *nirguṇa* and the immutable Brahman is the material as well as the instrumental cause of the universe which being Brahman is as real as He Himself. Here Vallabha introduces his doctrine of the difference between the *prapañca* (the world-order) and the *saṁsāra*; the *prapañca* or *jagat* is real but the *saṁsāra* of the individual soul consisting of ego-consciousness, the consciousness of 'I' and 'mine', is unreal as it is caused by the five aspects or the knots of *avidyā* (the nescience). As the *saṁsāra* is caused by *avidyā* it is sublatable by knowledge; *jagat* or *prapañca*, on the other hand, is an aspect of Brahman and is, therefore, absolutely real and as such indestructible by any kind of knowledge whatsoever. Brahman which, according to Vallabha, is *nirguṇa*, immutable (*avikṛta*) and of the nature of Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss, through its twin powers of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) and concealment (*tirobhāva*) transforms Himself in the form of universe with its Inconscient *Prakṛti* and the conscious jīvas but during the course of this process Its real and essential nature remains unchanged; therefore, the world (*jagat*) is real and eternal.

Difference between *prapañca* and *saṁsāra*.

On the question as to which of the two, knowledge and devotion (*bhakti*), is the ultimate instrument of human emancipation Vallabha holds the view, like other Vaiṣṇavites, that *bhakti* is always superior to knowledge though devotion combined with knowledge is supreme as declared by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavadgītā*. All the three, viz., *karma* (action). *jñāna* (knowledge) and *bhakti* (devotion), have their own ends; by following the path of Karma one undergoes the process of transmigration and enjoys the pleasures of worldly objects, by knowledge one attains and merges into the Akṣara Brahman and by *bhakti* the devotee acquires through God's Grace his ultimate union with Paramātman and enjoys unlimited delight and takes part in His eternal-sport (nitya-līlā). The Vallabhites therefore, denounce the Śaṁkarite conception of *mukti* — which to them means only merger and absorption in the Akṣara Brahman — as of the lower order (*kevalamukti*) in comparison to either union with Puruṣottama or participation in His Divine Sport.

Bhakti, not knowledge, is the ultimate instrument of emancipation.

According to the Vāllabha School, *bhakti* is of two kinds, viz., *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*. When the object of devotion, with whom the devotee is ultimately united, is *saguṇa*, the devotion so undertaken is called *saguṇa*; when, however, the object of devotion is *nirguṇa*, the devotion is characterised as *nirguṇa*. For Vallabha and his followers the Paramātman or Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is *nirguṇa* and all other gods and His *vibhutis* are *saguṇa*; as such, *nirguṇa-bhakti* is only that which is directed towards Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Path of Knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*) in which there is the predominance of the *sattva-guṇa* is also a kind of *saguṇa-bhakti* whose ultimate end is the attainment of identity with Akṣara Brahman; it is only the knowledge and *bhakti* (devotion) of Puruṣottama that is really *nirguṇa* and leads to the highest and the supreme attainment.

Saguṇa and *Nirguṇa bhakti.*

Probably the greatest and the most original contribution of Vallabha as an exponent of religion and religious experience is his introduction of the concept of *Puṣṭi-bhakti*, which has hitherto never been brought into the forefront as a religious way of life. All the earlier teachers. including Śaṁkara, had emphasised that *bhakti* is a means to the attainment of Brahman or Paramātman and that it should be performed in accordance with the instructions contained in the Vedas and other Scriptures and that it was generally the privilege of the three *dvija*-classes, viz., the Brāhmaṇa, the Kṣattriya and the Vaiśyas. Vallabha named this particular way as *Maryādāmārga*. Besides this, he preached another way of devotion, as distinct from the *Maryādāmārga*, which is known as the *Puṣṭimārga* or the way of the Grace of God. "In the *Puṣṭimārga*, however, through the operation of the divine grace only, one starts with loving the Lord and then practises *śravaṇa* etc. out of love and not with a view to generating it."[1] There is no distinction of caste, creed or sex; it is a universal religion in which even the down-trodden and socially degraded, the women and the śudras, are owned by the Almighty as His own. The path of Puṣṭi, which is treaded only after God has showered His Grace, is one of intense and deep-concentrated love in which this love for the Lord becomes both the means and the end for His devotee. As we shall have the occasion

Puṣṭibhakti & *Puṣṭimārga.*

1. Bhatt, G. H. : *Śrī Vallabhācārya & His Doctrines*, p. 18.

to discuss this concept at a considerable length in this work, the *Puṣṭimārga* associates itself with the innermost depths of man's spiritual consciousness and is aimed at the fulfilment of the highest and supreme religious experience, overbrimming with delight, in which one perceives everything in the Lord; it is not merely a way of eating, drinking and enjoying as some scholars have upheld in their utmost ignorance. The religious experience involved in *puṣṭibhakti* has a mystic overtone which, in its details, at times, bears resemblance with the feelings and expressions of the celebrated Christian mystics like St. Teresa, St. Paul and St. John of the Cross. It is for the first time in the history of Indian Philosophy and Religion that an attempt has been made by Vallabha to explain the significance and importance of emotionalism in devotion on the basis of philosophical interpretation. Though the doctrine of emotional devotion (*rāgātmikā-bhakti*) has reached its culmination in Śrī Caitanya — who was Vallabha's junior contemporary — Vallabha's own contribution and originality as an exponent of the philosophy of emotional-devotion or Love of God is no less because he established it on the secure foundations of his philosophy of Śuddhādvaita or Pure Monism.

Contribution of Śrī Vallabha and his followers to Indian Philosophy and Religion.

As we shall discuss in the following chapters of this book, Vallabha and his followers laboured hard to explain that because the Ultimate Reality is one, eternal, transcendent as well as immanent, all-pervasive *saccidānanda* that the non-intelligent and inanimate *Prakṛti*, with its evolutes, and the conscious spirits are nothing but the real manifestations of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa; the so-called external-world being only a posture of Brahman is absolutely real and that the bondage of the individual soul is destructible only through the will and Grace of God. In asserting these judgements the Vallabhites have had to incur the displeasure of not only the philosophers of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, who are proclaimed to be their professed enemies. but also of the protagonists of the other Vaiṣṇavite Systems of which the Dvaita School of Madhvācārya happens to be the most prominent since its ultimate philosophical position is totally at variance with Vallabha's monistic hypothesis. In the different independent works of Śrī Vallabhācārya and his followers and the commentaries written thereon

by Śrī Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja and others a sustained effort has been made to remove the doubts of the thinkers of the other Schools. In his gloss on *Aṇubhāṣya* entitled *Prakāśa*, Puruṣottamajī Maharāja has regularly quoted the opinions of the other Schools and has subsequently criticised them in order to maintain the validity of the Śuddhādvaita system. In style and manner of exposition, the writings of this excellent master and the genius of the Vāllabha School bears resemblance to the philosophical criticism of the contemporary age. Nevertheless, the literature of the Vāllabha School, despite the efforts of Śrī Viṭṭhalanāth and Puruṣottamajī Maharāja is wanting in such dialectical works of high-order — as remarked by M.M. Gopīnāth Kavirāja[1] — as the *Śatadūṣaṇī*, the *Nyāyāmṛta* or the *Advaita-siddhi* of the other schools. The reason for this drawback may probably be found in Vallabha's conviction and contention that the ultimate truth is unattainable through logic and that the Truth can be known only under the flood of light reflected by the four Scriptures, viz., the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhāgavata*. We shall, however, discuss all these points, in detail, in the various chapters of this work and find for ourselves to what extent Vallabha's claim about *Śuddhādvaita* as the only valid system of philosophy — a system harmonious with the teachings of the Upaniṣads — can be maintained and to what extent he has been successful in upholding the theistic tradition of the Bhāgavata and the Pāñcarātra sects.

1. Kavirāja, Mm. Gopīnāth, : *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti aur Sādhanā*, Vol. II p. 240.

CHAPTER II

THE CRITERION AND DEGREES OF REALITY

(A) THE CRITERION

Knowledge of Ultimate Reality is a pre-requisite for deliverance.

In India, metaphysical enquiry into the ultimate nature of Reality is prompted not so much out of a sense of curiosity and wonder as out of a conviction and belief that the knowledge of Reality is in some way instrumental in the deliverance of man from the shackles of his earthly bondage. Whatever the position and importance of knowledge in a philosophical system, it is universally acknowledged as the gateway to the transcendent regions of the land of Mystery behind the appearance of phenomena. The Śuddhādvaita School of Vallabhācārya is, however, no exception; it concedes forthwith that the devotee in possession of the knowledge of Ultimate Reality is loved the most by the Lord who, by His Grace, admits him to the regions of Supreme Bliss and His Eternal Sport. As declared in the *Bhāgavata*, "The Knowledge of the Lord and His realisation into one's own self cuts the knot in the heart, removes all doubts and destroys all the *karmas*." [1] The knowledge of the Ultimate Reality is, therefore, an essential pre-requisite for emancipation (mokṣa) as well as the highest spiritual attainment.

The Problems.

The moment we initiate an enquiry into the nature of Reality we are confronted with diverse problems : Is it existent or non-existent, conscious or unconscious, blissful or painful? Is it determinate or indeterminate? Is it qualitative or quality-less? But such questions cannot be answered unless we know what is actually meant by the term 'real'; in other words, unless we are in possession of a criterion of reality by which we may distinguish between the 'real' and the 'false', no knowledge

1. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (I, 2, 21).

of reality is possible. "Truth can be known and distinguished from its negative only when a criterion warranting its existence and differentiating it from falsehood has been well comprehended." Moreover, for the comprehension of the ultimate and the absolute nature of Truth, the criterion for our judgement should also be absolute and not pertaining only to what is phenomenally real or mere appearance.

The need for criterion.

In Indian Philosophy the term 'real' is generally used in two different senses. Firstly, it implies the correspondence of knowledge with the true nature of its object and, secondly, it refers to what is eternal, permanent and immutable. The first of these is of an epistemological bearing whereas the second transcends all phenomenal appearances and enters into a region that is beyond logic and the means of human cognition (*pramāṇas*). This, however, does not mean that the two implications are mutually exclusive; on the contrary, we may always find 'a harmonious blending between the two, the difference only consisting in the attitude of attaching ultimate importance'.

Meanings of 'real'.

When we glean through the opinions of the different Schools of Indian Philosophy on the question of the criterion of reality we find that the realists of almost all the hues – such as Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Mīmaṁsā and Mādhva Vedānta – contend that the object of any of the instuments of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is absolutely real. According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika School, what is the object of right-knowledge is real and right knowledge is that which presents an object with a character which it really has. "A perception is erroneous when it presents an object with a character which it does not possess." Reality in Nyāya, therefore, is the very nature of the substance which consists in being the object of any of the *pramāṇas*. That which is not an object of *pramāṇa* has no reality at all; it is an absolute non-entity like the hare's horn [1]. Almost the same view is upheld by the Prabhākara School of Mīmāṁsā which lays down that the 'real' is that which possesses the capacity to be the object of *pramāṇa*. The Mādhva School of Vaiṣṇavism strikes almost

The Nyāya standpoint.

The Prabhākara and the Mādhva criteria.

1. Narain. K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedāṁta*, p. 11.

an identical note on this crucial issue. Madhva discusses the question of the criterion of reality in his *Tattvodyota*[1] and contends that reality consists in being the object of experience. Whatever is an object of indefectible experience is always true and is beyond any possibility of error; it is *alīka* alone (like the hare's horn) which is unreal for it is never an object of cognition. Thus to Madhvites objectivity in relation to valid experience is the sufficient criterion of reality. Apprehending the possibility of a criticism against this criterion on the ground that illusions too are the objects of experience Vyāsa Tīrtha, the greatest exponent and dialectician of the Mādhva School, has suggested a slightly different criterion in his *Nyāyāmṛta*. According to him, 'reality' is that which is not the counter-entity (*pratiyogin*) of absolute negation with reference to all time and space, meaning, thereby, that in order to be real a thing must exist at a particular point of time and space.

The Buddhist view-point.

The idealist school of Buddhism and Advaita Vedānta have, however, refused to tread on the realist's path. To them, the contention that whatever is an object of experience or the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇas*) is real is invalid for it glaringly stands contradicted in cases of illusions. None the less, they assign to the realist's criterion a reality that is only practical (*vyāvahārika*) and not transcendental (*pāramārthika*) as is the case with the Buddhist criterion of *arthakriyākāritva* (law of causal efficiency) which maintains that the criterion of existence consists in the performance (by the real) of certain specific functions, in other words, in the production of some effect in a particular way; that which produces such an effect is called *sat* or existent.

The Śaṁkarite criterion.

Wherein does then consist the absolute criterion? To the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta it consists in the law of non-contradiction with reference to all time and space. That which is not contradicted either in past, present or future alone has the title to absolute reality. To the Advaitin all the realistic definitions of the real are insufficient and contradictory explanations of Truth. Yet they desist from the Buddhist criterion which assigns to *nissvabhāvatā* alone the epithet of absoluteness; instead, they contend that non-contradiction is the final criterion of reality. As we have

1. *Tattvodyota*, p. 19.

remarked, elsewhere, the "Vedāntin approach is not so much the formulation of the relation between 'reality' and 'non-contradiction' as the assertion of the position that what is contradicted is always false." [1] Vedānta, therefore, concludes that what is contradicted is false; not only this, the converse that what is non-contradicted is true is also beyond suspicion, The absolute criterion of truth, according to Śaṁkarites, therefore, is the absence of contradiction with reference to any point of time and space. It is on the basis of this criterion that all the three types of finitude — the finitude due to space, time and substance — is denied to Brahman. Almost a similar approach is witnessed in Prof.

Similarity with Bradley.

Bradley's assertion that the 'self-contradictory could not be real' and that the "ultimate reality is such that it does not contradict itself; here is an absolute criterion. And it is proved absolute by the fact that either in endeavouring to deny it, or even in attempting to doubt it, we tacitly assume its validity." [2]

Often an objection is raised against the Śaṁkarite criterion that non-contradiction being negative and prohibitive in nature is incapable of imparting positive knowledge. How can the law of non-contradiction be a sufficient criterion for obtaining a positive knowledge about reality? Almost in the Bradleyian strain, the Advaitins justify their standpoint by contending that though the complete and the real nature of Truth is beyond the grasp of this criterion yet by pointing to the unreality of the 'self-contradictory' they underline the truth of a positive foundational Essence and Being. To quote from Prof. Bradley's argument, "If by the nature of reality we understand its full nature, I am not contending that this in a complete form is knowable. But that is very far from being the point here at issue. For the objection denies that we have a standard which gives any positive knowledge, any information, complete or incomplete, about the genuine reality. And this denial assuredly is mistaken." [3] To the Vedāntins, therefore, non-contradiction is the sufficient and absolute criterion of reality.

1. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 13.
2. Bradley, F.H., : *Appearance and Reality*, p. 120.
3. *Ibid*, p. 122.

The philosophers of Advaita Vedānta have mentioned, in their works, two other statements about truth which only seem to be derived corollaries of their law of non-contradiction. These are : (1) The 'truth' is unlimited and (2) the 'real' is always 'eternal'. In the later Post-Śaṁkarite literature 'finitude' is contemplated as one of the reasons for establishing the falsity of world, consequently, the Truth has necessarily to be unlimited. As regards the contention that the real is always eternal, Vācaspati forthrightly explains in his *Bhāmatī*[1] that the eternal is only real and the real nature of an object always presupposes its eternal character.

(B) VALLABHITE CRITERION OF REALITY

Vallabha's definition of the 'real'

In his *Subodhinī* on the Tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata* Vallabha defines *satya*[2] (the reality) as that which is not contradicted (*abādhita*) and belongs to the true nature of the Lord. This definition is further elaborated by Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja in his *Prakāśa* where he equates the 'real' with 'the existing character of the object (*satvaṁ yathārthaṁ*). Thus the Vallabhite idea of reality acquires two chief connotations, viz., (1) non-contradiction and (2) 'correspondence with the true characters of the object'. The second of these, i.e., the real is *yathārtha*, is generally acceptable to almost all the thinkers of Indian Philosophy, both realists and idealists, the dispute being confined to its ultimate validity. For the Indian Realists the 'correspondence notion theory' is as much the mainstay of their epistemology as it is to their Western counterparts like G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell. But, for the idealists this theory, which suffers from serious drawbacks, is ill-fated to be an absolute criterion. None-the-less the concept of the 'real' as '*yathārtha*' is predominantly epistemological in character and acquires significance only in arriving at a judgement whether a particular cognition is *pramā* (right knowledge) or not, i.e., in a knowledge-situation. The Vallabhites, as conceded by Śrī Puruṣottama, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, unambiguously declare that *pramā* or

1. *Bhāmati*, p. 37.
2. Sa Ātma satyamabādhitaṁ bhagavatāḥ sadrūpaṁ.
(*Subodhinī* on *Bhāgavata*, śloka X, 2, 25).

right knowledge is always correct or is the true experience (*yathārthā-nubhavaḥ*). But one may doubt if such a definition of reality which is epistemic in character and thus related more to knowledge than to thing can be a sufficient guarantee about its ultimate truth. We are, therefore, justified in seeking the remedy in the law of non-contradiction as proposed by Vallabha and his followers.

Vallabha's – non contradiction – difference, from Śaṁkara.

At the first sight Vallabha's definition of reality as the one which is not contradicted may appear similar to the Śaṁkarite criterion yet the two concepts are widely divergent in their conclusions. While emphasizing that the real is always non-contradicted the Śaṁkarites, in their search after such an Absolute Reality also condemned the contradicted as unreal and ultimately professed the unreality of the world-order from the ultimate standpoint; they vigorously asserted that it is only the eternal and the unlimited that has a claim to reality. Vallabha, on the other hand, dismissed this conclusion as unwarranted. Like other Vaiṣṇavites he proclaimed that the 'non-eternal' and the 'limited' are as much [1] real as the eternal and the unlimited, their differences consisting only in their individual nature and not in their reality.

Resolution of the difficulty.

We may be a little perplexed at such a conclusion. How can the Vallabhites contend that the 'contradicted' is not unreal while at the same time giving credence to the law of non-contradiction as the criterion of reality? An answer to this paradox may be found in their doctrine of manifestation and concealment (*āvirbhāva - tirobhāva*) according to which every effect in this world is a manifestation of the ultimate cause — the Brahman. Even though the right knowledge of a thing e.g., a pot, is contradicted by a subsequent knowledge of its destruction yet the pot continues to exist as 'cause' and in its essence as Brahman it subsists non-contradicted. As such, from the Vallabhite point of view nothing is really contradicted in essence; what is contradicted is only the 'effect' or the temporal manifestation of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman. As we shall consider, in detail, while discussing the Vallabhite theory of illusion, in the chapter 'The Theory of Knowledge', it is only the *viṣayatā*-the sense-datum of illusion-and not the *viṣaya* which

1. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 17.

is an object of contradiction. According to Vallabha and his followers, the objectivity (the sense-datum) to illusion or *viṣayatā* being a product of *māyā* is essentially different from *viṣaya* which is nothing else but Brahman [1] Himself. Because the world or *jagat*, in its causal form and essence, is identical with the all-pervasive and immanent Brahman, it is acknowledged to be as real as the Lord Himself. For the Vallabhites all illustrations involving contradiction are really cases of the contradiction of *viṣayatā* and fall within the realm of *saṁsāra* which is a product of avidyā (ignorance), an evolute of *Māyā*. We will, however, undertake a detailed account of the Vallabhite theory of *saṁsāra* in a subsequent chapter of this work and explain how Vallabha distinguished it from *jagat* (the world) and its existence.

From the above explanation of the law of non-contradiction as the criterion of absolute reality it may be apparent that it is Brahman alone who continues to be non-contradicted in essence and the real knowledge about Him is never contradicted. On the other hand, the knowledge of all things of the universe, that are His effects, are sublatable in the course of their manifestation. Even when the effects (*kārya*) are not unreal their concealment or dissolution may render them sublatable notwithstanding the reality remaining in tact. From the Vallabhite standpoint, we have thus a situation in which all things of the universe, both conscient and inconscient, stand in a gradational series of manifestation — therefore, sublation also — at the top of which is the full-fledged blissful reality of Puruṣottama who manifests in His Being Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. It is a basic conception of Vallabhite Philosophy that the manifestation of the Cosmos, including the souls, has its basis in a definite principle, the principle being the gradual manifestation of bliss during the course of the manifestation of the three attributes of Saccidānanda Brahman. In the field of Nature, there is only the manifestation of Existence; in the conscious world of spirits there is the manifestation of both Existence and Consciousness; in the realm of the *antaryāmin* there is Existence, consciousness and some part of bliss; in the domain of the Akṣara-Brahman along with Existence and Consciousness the Pure Bliss is also manifested though in a limited measure [1]; and, at

Sublation does not imply unreality.

1. Viṣayo bhagavān viṣayatā māyā janyā iti anena viṣayarūpasya jagato viṣayatāyāḥ pṛthakatvasvīkārāt.

(*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p.69).

last, it is the Puruṣottama who overbrims with unlimited and immeasurable Pure Delight.

(C) DEGREES OF REALITY

The concept of degree.

It is thus clear without any figment of doubt that the Vallabhite Philosophy was convinced of the gradational manifestation of Reality and acquiesced in what may be called 'The Theory of the Degrees of Truth and Reality'. The truth of this conviction is brought out clearly by Śrī Vallabha's definition of *satya* (real) as *vrata* or Supreme Excellence (*utkṛṣṭa*) in the very same śloka [2] of the *Bhāgavata*. What he meant was that the Absolute Reality of Brahman alone is truly real whereas all manifestations in cosmos, though real, are of lesser degree as they are wanting in the manifestation of Bliss. Thus, there is not actually the gradation of Being but only the gradational hierarchy of the character of Being or Reality.

Difference with Advaita Vedānta.

Lest this theory of the Degrees of Reality in Vallabhite Philosophy be confused with the Śaṁkarite theory of the three orders of reality it may not be improper to dwell on this point a little at length. Śaṁkara, as we know, had conceived of the three orders of reality, viz., the *pāramārthika*, the *vyāvahārika* (phenomenal) and the *prātibhāsika* (illusory). The first, i.e., the *pāramārthika* is the true nature of Ātman or Brahman which is attributeless and is the transcendence of all determinations and predications; it is the permanent substratum behind the changing forms of phenomena and of the nature of self - illuminating consciousness; it is a non-composite, eternal pure consciousness beyond all name and form and is the witness of all human experiences. This *pāramārthika-sattā* or Brahman transcends all logic and is ineffable; the only way of communicating anything about it is to express in terms of negatives.

The three orders of reality according to Śaṁkara

As a matter of fact, from the ultimate standpoint, the *pāramārthika* order is the only Reality in Advaita Vedānta. But as this does not explain the phenomenal experience of world and facts of life.

1. Prākṛtāḥ sakalā devāṇ gaṇitānandakaṁ bṛhat,
   Pūrṇānando haristasmāt, kṛṣṇa eva gatirmama.
   (*Śrīkṛṣṇāśraya*, śloka, 8).

2. *Bāagavata*, śloka (X, 2, 57).

Śaṁkara conceived of another order of reality whose truth is confined only to practical life and existence, i.e., the *vyāvahārika* order of reality. The *vyāvahārika-sattā*, according to Śaṁkara, is caused by the mutual super-imposition of the 'real and the 'unreal' or the 'self' and the 'not-self' whose material cause is said to subsist in the beginningless and positive *avidyā*. The third or the *prātibhāsika* order belongs to purely illusory cases such as that of the appearance of silver in conch-shell or that of the snake in a rope. The Śaṁkarite theory of illusion, however, attributes the causality of illusion to *avidyā* also. But then in what consists the difference between the *vyāvahārika* and the *prātibhāsika* orders if both are caused by *avidyā* and are ultimately sublatable? The reason for the difference lies in the persistent character of phenomenal objects and their importance in the practical life of man which compelled Śaṁkara to accept the reality of *vyavahāra* as a stage between the *prātibhāsika* reality of illusion and the ultimate transcendental reality. "For Vedānta, the *vyāvahārika* order has its appearance and existence only as long as one has not annihilated *avidyā* with all its products by obtaining the supreme realization of Brahman. The difference between the *vyāvahārika* and the *prātibhāsika* orders of reality consists only in the fact that, whereas, the former exists as long as one has not achieved the supreme realization of Brahman, the latter is sublated during the course of *vyavahāra*." [1]

Vallabhite refutation of the Śaṁkarite position.

The Vallabhite reaction to the above Śaṁkarite conception is one of utter disagreement. As a votary of the Vaiṣṇavite tradition Vallabha was dead against the idea of renegating the reality of world to any lesser order of reality and conceiving it as caused by *avidyā* so that from the ultimate standpoint it becomes unreal. He was quite emphatic that the world or *jagat* is as real as Brahman; the difference only lies in the former's insufficient manifestation and nature and not in the fact of their realities. Thus, for Vallabha, as for other Vaiṣṇavites like Rāmānuja, Madhva and Nimbārka, the Śaṁkarite theory of the *vyāvahārika* order of reality is meaningless and an utter nonsense. As regards the *prātibhāsika* order also, Vallabha is vehemently opposed to the Śaṁkarite position. For Vallabha objectivity in illusion is a creation of *Māyā*; as it is purely *māyika* in character

1. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 26.

it is utterly false and there is no justification for its inclusion within the 'grades of reality'. For Vallabha the reality is only one and whatever is not real is false. He is quite unsympathetic to the Śaṁkarite claim about the possibility of an *anirvacanīya-sattā* which is neither 'real' nor 'unreal' on the ground that it contradicts the Law of Excluded Middle.

Vallabhite concept of degrees as gradation of manifestation.

It is thus clear that the Vallabhite concept of the degrees of reality is based, purely, on the doctrine of the gradation of the manifestation of Brahman's Bliss. As we shall elaborate further in the next chapter, the Absolute or Brahman, according to Vallabha, is determinate, full of attributes and personal; it is an Individual and a Concrete Universal and is not an Indeterminate Whole of the Śaṁkarites. As remarked by Prof. Bradley, "The Absolute, considered as such, has of course no degrees; for it is perfect, and there can be no more or less in prefection. Such predicates belong to and have a meaning only in the world of appearance." [1] So the concept of degrees in Vallabhite philosophy is only with regard to the manifested aspects of Brahman — from the Inconscient Nature to Akṣara-Brahman — and not with Puruṣottama as such. As suggested by Prof. Joachim in another context, "the degree of truth is measured by the fullness of expression which the significance obtains in each case." [2] And here in Vallabha's philosophy fullness of expression synchronises with the fullness of expression or manifestation of Brahman's Bliss which has been deliberately concealed by Him during the course of the world-play. The measure of the manifestation of this Bliss determines the lower or the higher status of the manifested-reality.

Parallels in Western Philosophy – Bradley and Joachim.

1. Bradley, F.H. : *Appearance and Reality*, p. 318.
2. Joachim. H.H. : *The Nature of Truth*, p. 104.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF REALITY – THE BRAHMAN

In Chapter VI of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* it is asserted that 'in the beginning there was only Being, one without a second',[1] and that no Being could be born out of Non-Being. This statement has continued to be the foundational and the pivotal concept of almost all the monists in Indian Philosophy including Vallabha as well; they all were of one voice that the Ultimate Reality is only one without a second notwithstanding their difference on the question of the structure of this Reality. According to Śaṁkara, the very purpose of the VIth Chapter of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* 'is to explain how the unitary character or oneness of Reality is possible'.[2] The very title of Vallabha's system of philosophy as *Śuddhādvaita* is indicative of the truth that he was a thorough going monist believing only in the being of only One Reality — the Brahman (*the advaita*) which is the ground, the cause as well as the manifested-form of world-appearance. To him, as for Śaṁkara, there is nothing other than Brahman, the one and only one Positive Being whose wish to be many resulted in the manifested phenomenal appearance with its 'bewildering mass of phenomenal diversity'.[3] By the knowledge of this One Reality, 'the unheard becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought-of and the unknown becomes known'.[4]

Though Vallabha, like other Vedāntists, was against acknowledging the efficacy[5] of logic in grasping the real nature and character

1. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 2, 1-2).
2. Katham ca tadekatvamiti tadārtho ayam ṣaṣthoadhyāyaḥ.
   (Śaṁkara's Introduction on *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, Chapter VI)
3. Bradley, F.H. : *Appearance and Reality*, p. 123.
4. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 1, 3).
5. Acintyākhalu ye bhāvāḥ na tānstarkeṇa yojayet.
   (*Matsya Purāṇa*, śloka 113.6)

of transcendental verities yet in his philosophy a logical and rational basis for accepting the unitary character of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman may be found. According to him, any pluralistic concept of Reality as the one propagated in Mādhva philosophy where Reality is classified as Independent and Dependent and the five types of difference (*pañcabhedas*) are conceived as ultimately real would be a violation of the standard or the criterion as discussed in the previous chapter. If the reals are many, they are either mutually related or perfectly closed units without any windows. The acceptance of the first alternative would ultimately lead to the emergence of unity between them whereas the second possibility would end in extreme pluralism as of Bertrand Russell for whom 'the universe is all spots and jumps, without unity, without continuity, without coherence or orderliness or any of the other properties that governesses love'.[1] It is almost difficult to maintain the independence, the co-existence of the 'reals', and the order between them without the introduction of the *deux ex machina* or the Divine Reality; but the presumption of this Divine Reality overlording the other 'reals' would lead to further insurmountable difficulties and complexities. The Vallabhites, therefore, pooh-poohed the very idea of ultimate pluralism and insisted that the *advaita* is the only view that is logically tenable and supported by the revelations of the *śrutis*. As expressly pointed out by them, the *bhedavāda* or pluralism contradicts such *śrutis* as 'There is only one reality without a second' (*Ekaṁ-evādvitīyaṁ*), 'All this is the Puruṣa (*puruṣaivedaṁ sarvaṁ*)' etc. Moreover, if pluralism be a valid philosophy the very question put by Āruṇi to his son Śvetaketu (Didn't thou ask for that teaching through which the unheard becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought of and the unknown becomes known?) would be rendered[2] futile and redundant. The question itself presupposes that the ultimate reality is non-dual (*advaita*), whose knowledge can lead to the knowledge of all that is known. The ultimate reality is, therefore, one and not many.

Denunciation of Pluralism.

In India, as in the West, Monism has appeared in its various hues. Its extreme form is available in the Śāmkara School of Vedānta

1. Russell, B.: *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 98.
2. Bhedavādināṁ mate sarvavijñānapratijñābhaṅgaḥ.
(*Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, p. 18)

Shades of Indian Monism.

where the Ultimate Reality or Brahman is conceived as one undifferentiated, indeterminate, all-pervasive, taintless and impartite Whole whose [1] real nature is Consciousness. The Absolute, as conceived in this system, is perfectly homogeneous without any differentiation, attribution or part. To Rāmānuja Brahman is a Concrete Absolute with infinite attributes containing in its Organism both the conscious-souls (*cit*) and Inconscient Primordial Matter (*acit*) in their subtle forms. He, therefore, asserted that the nature of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman is *cidacidviśiṣṭa*; that It should, in the state of dissolution, contain both the *cit* and the *acit* in their subtle forms in its Organic Whole is contained in the very nature of the Absolute. Nimbārka, on the other hand, described the Reality as both identity and difference; to him, Brahman is at once identical with and different from the world of conscious spirits and matter as the sea is to the waves.

Vallabha's monism.

Now the question is : What, according to Vallabha, and his followers, is the character of the Absolute Unity? Is it a homogeneous and undifferentiated dark sheet like that of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta or is it a structural and organic unity harmonising in itself the whole mass of phenomenal diversity? As we shall discuss in detail in another chapter of this work, the reality of 'difference' (*bheda*), according to Vallabhites, pertains to the phenomenal and the manifested from of Brahman and not to its causal *svarūpa* (nature). It is only when, on account of Brahman's wish, the cosmos is manifested that 'difference' which is real appears on the scene; prior to the manifestation of *jagat* there was only the identity of Brahman whose nature, unlike that of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, was determinate (*saviśeṣa*) and replete with infinite divine and transcendental attributes. Vallabhācārya categorically denies in his Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa [2] of *Tattvadīpanibandha* the existence of any kind of difference, whether intra-genus (*sajātīya*), extragenus (*vijātīya*) or internal (*svagata*) and maintains that the ultimate nature of Brahman

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra. (VI, 2,1).
2. T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, śloka 66.

which transcends all distinction and differences embodies in itself innumerable pure and transcendental attributes, like Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, which form Its very nature. It is thus obvious that though the Vallabhite conception of the ultimate reality is neither organic or structural as in Rāmānuja nor homogeneous in the Śaṁkarite sense. It is a determinate homogeneity containing Its infinite attributes and powers born out of Its essential nature, the character of being the substratum of contradictory affirmations (*viruddhadharmāśrayatva*). We shall now disscuss all these points in detail, to assess the general nature of Brahman in Śri Vallabha's philosophy.

(A) BRAHMAN AS DETERMINATE AND ATTRIBUTIVE

Now when we try to comprehend the nature of Ultimate Reality or Brahman the most natural question that crops up in our minds is : Does the Reality consist of attributes or It transcends them and is quality-less? Is it determinate or indeterminate? 'The substantive and the adjective is a time-honoured distinction and arrangement of facts with a view to understand them and to arrive at reality' [1]. We are naturally led to cast our thinking in this mould. If the Reality is really substantive, it being the ground and the substratum of attributes has to be different from them. But this distinction between the substance and its attributes is itself a qualification. We are, therefore, baffled whether there can be anything besides its qualities. As asserted by Prof. Bradley, "If you predicate what is different, you ascribe to the subject what it is *not*; and if you predicate what is *not* different, you say nothing at all." [2] Thus, 'if the predicate makes no difference it is idle; but if its makes the subject other than it is, it is false.' Logically we are on the brink of a precipice beyond which there is an abyss; the substance, in itself, from the absolute standpoint, is thus beyond all attribution whatsoever and transcends all distinctions and differentiations.

The Śaṁkarite philosophy of *Nirviśeṣa* Brahman.

Confronted with this logical paradox, Śaṁkara and his followers described the real nature of Brahman or the Ultimate Reality as attributeless (*nirviśeṣa*), beyond all determinations and differentiations and as the transcendence

1. Bradley, F.H. : *Appearance and Reality*. p. 16.
2. *Ibid*, p. 17.

of all relativity and phenomena. To them, the main purport and the topic of discussion of the *śrutis* consist in imparting instructions about the *nirguṇa* aspect of Brahman. But the logic of this argument may bear scant justification in view of the various Upaniṣadic texts that refer to the determinate nature of Brahman. In the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* Brahman is described, "All-action, All- desire, All-odour, All-taste, pervading over all this, without speech, without perturbation-such is my Self within the heart; it is Brahman," [1] The *Taittirīyopaniṣad* ascribes the causality of the origination, sustenance and destruction [2] of the world-order to Brahman and there are numerous other *śrutis* that establish beyond any shadow of doubt that the Upaniṣads intended to convey the determinate character of Brahman. What then is Śaṁkara's explanation of such an apparent contradiction in the verdict of the *śrutis*?

Śaṁkara's various commentaries on the different Upaniṣads do not undertake a complete denunciation of the qualified nature of Brahman. What he simply emphasised was its empirical or *vyāvahārika* character. To him, the treatment of the *saguṇa* or the qualified nature of Brahman is undertaken by the Upaniṣads only for the purpose of worship (*upāsanā*) because the absolute and the transcendental aspect of Brahman is unsuitable as an object of devotion. But it may be questioned : How can Śaṁkara explain the description of Brahman, both in the *śrutis* and the *Vedānta-sūtras*, as the material and the instrumental cause of the origination,sustenance and destruction of the world-order? How can Brahman which is unqualified, transcendental and immutable be the material cause of such a changing, qualified and phenomenal cosmos? Śaṁkara, therefore, imagined of a different principle that belongs to the *vyāvahārika* order of reality and is the source of cosmic creation. This principle, the *Saguṇa-Brahman*, is the Lord or the ruler and the creator of the whole universe and is the object of devotion of all ignorant and deluded individual souls. This *Apara-Brahman* or *Īśvara* is lower

The Vedānta doctrine of Para and Apara Brahman and supremacy of *nirguṇa-śrutis.*

1. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 14, 4).
2. Yato vā imānibhūtāni jāyante, ena jātāni jīvanti...
(*Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra, 3,1,1)

to the supreme, *nirguṇa* and the absolute Brahman because it belongs to the *vyāvahārika* order of reality and is caused by the inexplicable principle of Māyā. It is to this *Apara Brahman* that the *saguṇa-śrutis* really refer to. Thus to Śaṁkara and his followers the *nirguṇa-śrutis* which refer to the absolute and the transcendental aspect of Brahman are superior to the *saguṇa-śrutis* describing Him as full of infinite attributes such as omniscience, omnipotence, etc., The *Apara* or the *Saguṇa-Brahman*, the object of *saguṇa-śrutis*, when viewed from the transcendental (*pāramārthika*) standpoint, is as *āvidyaka* and sublatable as the jīvātman. Both the *Īśvara* — the *Saguṇa-Brahman* — and the jīva have their origin in the conditioning of Brahman by Māyā and Avidyā on the analogy of the determintion of ether as 'pot-ether' and 'monastry-ether' by the two limitative adjuncts, viz., the pot and the monastry. As the nature of the ether remains unaffected by the defects and the determining conditions of pot and monastry, the real nature of Brahman as unqualified and beyond all change and difference is not vitiated by the conditioned existence of either Īśvara or jīva. The existence of *Īśvara* or the *Saguṇa-Brahman*, is, therefore, *āvidyaka* and does not create any contradiction with the real and the ultimate (*pāramārthika*) nature of Brahman. Thus the apparent contradiction between the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* was reconciled by Śaṁkara by contending that the *saguṇa śrutis* actually refer to the *aupādhika* Brahman and not to his *pāramārthika* essence; they are the *nirguṇa śrutis* that describe Brahman's absolute and transcendental aspect and in doing so they may be construed as disclosing the deeper aspect and nature of the Ultimate Reality. The *nirguṇa-śrutis* are, therefore, more internal than the *saguṇa* ones. Moreover, as 'attributes' always depend on 'substance' for their meaning the *nirguṇa-śrutis* may be regarded as primary and fundamental; the *saguṇa* texts are, therefore, secondary. The description of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, as available in the various *nirguṇa-śrutis* is, therefore, Its real and absolute nature and consequently Śaṁkara and his followers maintained that, from the absolute point of view, Brahman is beyond all distinctions and differentiations and is quality-less.

This thesis of the quality-less and the non-differentiated nature of Brahman has been vehemently criticised by almost all the Vaiṣṇavite

Vaiṣṇavite refutation of Śaṁkarite thesis.

thinkers who were all agog in denouncing the Śaṁkarite distinction between the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* and the relegation of the latter to a lower level as a mischievous calumny of a crypto-Buddhist or 'a thief who had crept into the order'. The distinction between the *Para* and the *Apara* Brahman, according to them, is nowhere indicated by the *śrutis*. They all collaborated in their endeavour to establish that the real and the absolute nature of Brahman is always determinate and attributive — probably, an impact of the Pāñcarātra tradition — and accorded a specific interpretation to the *nirguṇa*-texts. The banner of revolt was first raised by Rāmānuja followed by Madhva and then successfully upheld by Vallabha and other Vaiṣṇavite masters. It is, therefore, neither strange nor unexpected that on the question of the nature of Brahman it is the Śaṁkarite opinion that forms the main prima-facie view (*pūrvapakṣa*) in almost all the Vaiṣṇavite works and the arguments advanced by them are also identical.

Vallabhācārya and his followers also regarded the validity of the argument that the ultimate nature of Brahman is always determinate and attributive; Brahman to them, like other Vaiṣṇavites, is the repository of infinite attributes, a few out of which — the important ones — are described in the Upaniṣads and other Scriptural texts. In Viṭṭhalanātha's *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* we have a dialectical criticism of the Śaṁkarite theory and a resuscitation of the Vallabhite position. A short account of his arguments may, therefore, be efficacious for a proper understanding of the nature of Brahman in the Vāllabha School of Vedānta.

Viṭṭhalanātha raises the question : Are the two concepts of the *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa Brahman*, different or identical? If they are different, is their difference real [1] or unreal? In case this difference be contemplated as real. it would directly contradict the *Brahmasūtra* position as advanced in the sūtra 'Sarvatraprasiddhopadeśāt' [2] wherein the Chāndogya mantra. "All this is Brahman, as it originates, becomes absorbed and lives in It; one ahould meditate upon It calmly" [3], is interpreted as referring to Brahman. The term 'kurvīt' [4] as occurring

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 12.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (1, 2, 1).
3. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 4, 1).
4. Kurvītetyopadeśo na tu upāsanā. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, on sūtra, 1,2,1).

in this mantra is, as per Vallabha's interpretation, an instruction (*upadeśa*) and not meditation (*upāsanā*); the significance being that the whole cosmos has to be contemplated as really Brahman on the ground [1] that it is the source of its origination, sustenance and absorption. This identity of Brahman and the cosmos is not imaginary; instead, it is real and the result of the contemplation of such a truth is the purification of heart (*antaḥkaraṇa*). Thus, according to Vallabhites, this particular section of the *Brahmasūtra* clearly indicates that Brahman as the cause of origination etc. of the world, is the real and *pārāmārthika* Brahman and as such any consideration of the Nirguṇa Brahman as being different from It directly contravenes with the authority of the *Brahmasūtra* and is, therefore, untenable. Moreover, if there is a real difference between the *saviśeṣa* and the *nirviśeṣa* Brahman it would imply the position of duality contradicting the *śruti* that asserts that Reality [2] is one and non-dual.

From the account of the Śaṁkarite position as given above in this chapter, it may be apparent that they have never subscribed to the alternative view that the two aspects of Brahman are really different; instead they contend that the difference in question is only conditioned (*aupādhika*) and falsely created by *Māyā* or *Avidyā* — the limitative adjunct — like the conditioning of ether by pot, monastry, etc. But, according to Viṭṭhala, even this position is unenable. What is this *upādhi* which conditions Brahman and creates the difference between the *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* Brahman? Is it *avidyā*? If so, is this *avidyā* beginningless (*anādi*) or has it a beginning (*sādi*)? The second alternative is nowhere seriously upheld by the *pūrvapakṣa*; the Śaṁkarites were the ardent advocates of the philosophy that Brahman is conditioned only by the beginningless principle of Nescience. But if it is so, it means that there is a second eternal and beginningless principle other than Brahman violating the *śruti* that Reality is only one. Moreover this thesis, according to which *avidyā* is the limitative adjunct and Brahman is conditioned by it would imply the unending continuity of creation till eternity meaning thereby that there would be no destruction of the world-order, something in contravention of

1. *Prakāśa* on the above sūtra.
2. Ekamevādvitīyaṁ, *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 2, 1)

the dictates of the *śrutis* [1] Such a conclusion is inevitable for a philosophy that assigns doership and activity only to the Apara or the conditioned Brahman and not to the Para or the *pāramārthika* aspect of Brahman. But the *śrutis*, as explained by Vallabha, and his followers, indisputably assert that Brahman, as qualified by His will, is [2] in reality the instrumental-cause of world-creation unassisted by any other accessory cause or condition. The Śaṁkarite contention that the *saguṇa* aspect of Brahman is caused by beginningless *avidyā* also contradicts the verdict of the *Chāndogya śruti* which enjoins that there was only *sat* in the beginning (sadevasomya idamagraāsīt ekamevādvitīyaṁ). The use of the particle 'eva' clarifies all ambiguity and decides that there was only Brahman in the beginning unassociated with any other principle. It would be futile to explain as done by the Śaṁkarites commentators, that '*sat*' stands for 'Brahman' duly conditioned by [3] *avidyā*' and not for 'Absolute Brahman' because the earlier portions of this *śruti* are clearly that the word *sat* actually stands for 'Absolute Brahman' in its *pāramārthika* character. The *śruits* are unambiguous that doership actually belongs to Brahman and not to any other principle such as the *avidyā* of the Advaita Vedānta.

The Advaitic contention that activity or agency actually belongs to the *upādhi* and not to the *upahita* (the conditioned i.e., Brahman) would entail the absence of the independence of Brahman and thus destroy the concept of His activity. But the Śaṁkarites may retort that the absence of independence does not necessarily imply the absence of activity for though the servants of the king are not independent yet they are quite capable of acting on his behalf; as such there is no fallacy in the argument that though it is the limitative adjunct (*upādhi*) which is really active this activity is equally attributable to the conditioned (*upahita*) just as though it is the jar that moves, activity is also attributed to jar-ether (*ghaṭā-kāśa*). But to the Vallabhites [4] this defence is irrelevant for it directly contradicts the Upaniṣad-text that enjoins, 'From whom all the *bhūtas* are born'.[5] The interpretation

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 12.
2. *Suvarṇasūtra*, 17.
3. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 12 to 13 and *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 19.
4. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 19, 20.
5. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (3, 1, 1).

that this text is figurative and is only a eulogy is equally non-sensical because where a primary and indicative meaning is possible it is illogical to construe it figuratively. This principle is also recognised and adopted by the author of the *Brahmasūtra.*[1] The sūtra *'Tanniṣṭha-syamokṣopadeśāt'* [2] irrefutably establishes that the word 'Ātman' stands for the Pure Brahman and not the conditioned-one.

The Vallabhites further argue that the idea of a conditioned Brahman or Īśvara in spite of all its magnificent qualities of omniscience, omnipotence, etc., is absolutely the same as that of an individual soul (*jīva*) for both of them are conditioned; the Īśvara of Advaita Vedānta is as much worthy of denunciation (*heya*) as the jīva and such a conditioned principle can never be the object of devotion (*upāsanā*) as preached in the Upaniṣads. Brahman, the object of enquiry, in the sūtra *'Athātobrahmajijñāsā'* is really the *nirguṇa* and absolute Brahman and not the *saguṇa* and the conditioned Brahman. The Vallabhites, therefore, conclude that there is no validity in the Śaṁkarite contention that the objects of the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* are two different aspects of Brahman; in reality, they are the one and the same.

The Vallabhite criticism of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, like those of the other Vaiṣṇavite systems, hinges, around the concept of *avidyā*, its nature, its substrate (*āśraya*), its object (*viṣaya*) and its relation to Brahman. All these problems have been discussed threadbare by Viṭṭhalanātha in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* for disparaging the contention that *avidyā* is the cause of Brahman's conditioning. As we shall discuss these arguments elaborately while treating the concept of *ayidyā* in another chapter of this work. we refrain from discussing them here.

If we accept the Śaṁkarite interpretation of the *nirguṇa-śruti* and acknowledge their primacy, it would be difficult to vouchsafe the validity of the texts that describe the creation of world. The Śaṁkarite argument that these texts are descriptive only of Brahman's adventitious definition (*taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*) and not his essential definition (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*) — meant for the gradual unfolding of the real nature of Brahman on the analogy of *arundhatīnyāya* — is irrelevant because the existence of the world-order

Refutation of the Śaṁkarite interpretation of nirguṇa śrutis.

1. Gauṇaścennātmaśabdāt. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (1, 1, 6).
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (1, 1, 7).

is guaranteed not by any scriptural decree but by practical experience. The Advaitin's argument that the agency of Brahman in world-creation is resorted to only for its later denunciation so that it may lead to the higher step of the consciousness of Indeterminate Brahman would have been valid had the knowledge of the external world been produced by the instructions of the *śrutis* alone; unfortunately it is not so and whatever knowledge we possess about the external-world is a matter of practical experience.[1] The Śaṁkarite argument that the world creation is false because it is spoken of in the *śrutis* as being destructible by knowledge is redundant simply because the world, which is an object of human knowledge and experience, is real and incapable of being set aside by knowledge alone. In the chapter, 'The Philosophy of World' we shall discuss, in detail, the Vallabhite argument for the reality of world-phenomenon and their basic principle that it is destructible not by knowledge but by Lord's Will. As such, it is simply futile to contend that the validity of the scriptural texts dealing with creation would not be vitiated if we take our stand on the foundational principles of Advaita Vedānta. Viṭṭhalanātha, therefore, emphatically asserts that both the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* are equally valid and there is no justification in considering one as primary and the other as secondary. The Advaitins are guilty of contracting the meaning and significance of the Upaniṣadic texts describing the attributive[2] character of Brahman. But the Śaṁkarites may retort that the Vallabhites are equally guilty of such a misconduct for they too distort the import of the text that describe the indeterminate nature of Brahman. This point is refuted by the Vallabhites when they contend that the real flaw in the Śaṁkarite conception is their misunderstanding about the actual meaning of the *nirguṇa-śrutis*. According to Vallabha and his followers, such *nirguṇa-śrutis* as speak of the nature of Brahman as 'not-gross', 'not-atomic'[3] etc. do not imply a general negation of all attributes but only of the phenomenal attributes consisting of the three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. As explicitly maintained by Vallabha in his commentary[4] on the sūtra 'Tattusamanvayāt', these Upaniṣadic texts deny

1. Jagadapratītiprasaṁgāt. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 14)
2. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 21.
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, mantra (3, VIII, 8)
4. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 121.

only phenomenal attributes to Brahman who while manifesting them remains immutable for He is the substratum of the variouts kinds of contradicting attributes There is no impropriety in acknowledging the divine and transcendental attributes of Brahman such as *sat, cit* and *ānanda* (Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss). As remarked by Prof. Dasgupta, while giving an exposition of Rāmānuja's philosophy, "Even when Brahman is said to be real, pure-consciousness and infinite it means that these are the characters of Brahman and it is meaningless to say that they do not indicate some character. The scriptures cannot testify to the existence of any characterless entity."[1]

Reality as determinate and attributive.

It is illogical to imagine of an Indeterminate Brahman for It is beyond any possibility of proof as all proofs are based on the assumption of some qualified character. Vallabha and his followers, like Rāmānuja and Madhva, subscribe to the view that the ultimate character of Reality is always determinate and attributive and any endeavour towards construing the meaning of *nirguṇa-śrutis* as implying a blanket negation[2] of all attributes is horribly misleading. Brahman should not be considered as bereft of the divine and celestial attributes. This is the proper way of understanding the meaning of the *śrutis* as it harmonises both the *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa-śrutis* without involving the dilemma of the dual nature of Brahman — the Para and the Apara. For Vallabha, Brahman is only Pure, *Nirguṇa* and Determinate and is the real cause of the real world creation; the word '*nirguṇa*' in this context means the denial of the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* and not the denial of all attributes.

The argument that because the substantive is different from its attributes its nature should be non - attributive and, therefore, indeterminate is a figment of the logical mind which is used to such a distinction while dealing with phenomenal objects. There is no valid ground for applying this logical distinction to the transcendental and the absolute nature of Brahman. According to Vallabha, Brahman is as much the attributes as it is the substance

Refutation of the distinction between substance and attribute.

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 166.
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanam*, p. 12 and *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 21.

just as both the sun and its sunshine are only 'the sun'.[1] The very idea of distinction between the substance and the attribute is, from the transcendental and absolute standpoint, a fallacious creation of the human intellect and partial mental consciousness. To a seer with an integral consciousness of Brahman the argument favouring His attributive and determinate character is, therefore, beyond reproach. Such a view is upheld even by Prof. Bradley when he writes, "For a thing without qualities is clearly not real. It is mere Being or mere Nothing, according as you take it simply for what it is, or consider also that which it means to be. Such an abstracion is palpably of no use to us."[2] The nature of Brahman is, therefore, attributive and His qualities are transcendental and divine in the sense that they are different from the attributes of the phenomenal[3] and empirical world (*laukika-dharmas*); to imagine that they are absolutely transcendental and beyond the grasp of the human intuition would be incorrect and against the verdict of the *śrutis*. As Brahman is uncaused, His attributes are also uncaused[4] and are not effects like phenomenal qualities. The Vallabhites thus conclude that there is no opposition between the two types of Upaniṣadic texts describing Brahman as indeterminate and determinate and the real nature of Brahman consists of innate and infinite attributes involving the exclusion of all phenomenal qualities.[5]

This synoptic interpretation of the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* has been resorted to even by the philosophers of the Rāmānuja and the Mādhva schools and they ventured to establish the attributive character of Brahman almost on identical grounds. To us it seems that they emphasised the transcendence of both the phenomenal attributes and their denial into a higher principle, the Brahman, with His divine and non-phenomenal attributes. Almost the same note is struck by Śrī Aurobindo when he writes, "The Overmind Consciousness

Both *nirgūṇa* and *saguṇa śrutis* are equally valid.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3,2,15) and 'Arūpavatsūtravākye dharmāṇāṁ api brahmatā.' (*Suddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, 51).
2. Bradley, F.H. : *Appearance and Reality*, p. 112.
3. *Aṇubhāṣya* : p. 56 to 57.
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* : p. 909.
5. Tathā ca saviśeṣanirviśeṣanirūpakayoḥ śrutyoḥ virodhābhāvāt prāpañcikadharmarahitaṁ sahajānantadharmayuktaṁ brahmeti siddhaṁ. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 138)

maintains equally these two truths of the Eternal which face the mind as mutually exclusive alternatives (*saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*); it admits both as supreme aspects of one Reality; somewhere, then, behind them there must be a still greater Transcendence which originates them or upholds them both in its Supreme Eternity."[1]

(B) BRAHMAN - THE SUBSTRATUM OF CONTRADICTORY ATTRIBUTES

The Vallabhite acceptance of both the *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa śrutis* while acknowledging the real character of the attributes of Brahman has posed a serious problem to their philosophy. Brahman is described in these *śrutis* as both Indeterminate and as the creator and sustainer of the universe; as both Infinite and manifesting Itself as finite, as atomic and all pervasive, and as One who, notwithstanding his Omnipresence resides in the hearts of all individual souls. In *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*[2] He is described as 'one who moves yet does not move, one who is far off yet quite near.' In *Kaṭhopaniṣad*[3] we have the description that Brahman is smaller than the atom and greater than the greatest (*mahat-parimāṇa*) and He while sitting goes far off and while asleep goes every where. Not only this, the *Vedānta-sūtras*, as interpreted by Vallabha and his followers, assert in uncertain terms that Brahman is the substratum of contradictory attributes. As we shall discuss in the following pages, the Vallabhites considered Brahman as both Passive and Active, as one who is Indeterminate and yet he is the source of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the world-order, as one who is both transcendent and immanent, as one from whom the real evolution of the changing world-order starts and yet He suffers no mutation, as one who being all-pervasive and omnipresent resides as the indweller (*antaryāmin*) in the hearts of the millions of creatures. How such contradictory assertions for the same Brahman are possible is entirely baffling to the human mind and is practically the greatest paradox of Upaniṣadic philosophy.

Contradictory assertions about Brahman in the *śrutis*.

The Śaṁkarites, on their part, resolved this paradox by advancing the theroy of the dual Brahman. the Para and the Apara, and asserting that all references to Him in the *śrutis* as consisting of attributes and

1. Śrī Aurobindo. : *The Life Divine*, p. 283.
2. *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, mantra 5.
3. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 20 to 21)

The Paradox.

as creator of the world-order etc. pertain only to the *Apara* (lower) Brahman and are, therefore, *aupādhika* (conditioned) and *māyika* whereas Brahman's real and ultimate nature is described in the *nirguṇa-śrutis* which speak of Him only in negative terms. The utility of such *saguṇa-śrutis* which attempt to describe Brahman in attributive terms and regard Him as both the instrumental and material cause of world-creation where He transforms Himself into the cosmic order by His all-pervasive one-ness is only functional and they are true only from the *vyāvahārika*, and not from the *pāramārthika* standpoint; the world-creation also from the ultimate standpoint is only illusory and inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*). But for an outright realist like Vallabha who propagates the reality of the world-order and its creation, believes in the Lord's celestial attributes and His Divine Will as cause of the world-movement and becoming, has a strong apathy for any such distinction as the *Para* and *Apara* Brahman, the problem of this paradox really presents a serious difficulty. The problem is more confounded and sharpened in its acuteness by Vallabha's repeated emphasis in his works that the scriptural texts should be understood, as far as possible, only indicatively (*abhidhā*) and the figurative interpretation should be undertaken only as the last resort.

The logical difficulty.

To human intellect and reason, such contradictory attributes and statements blatantly violate such laws of logic as the Law of Contradiction and the Law of the Excluded Middle and if at all any rational justification of these contradictory assertions is to be found it is available only in the Śaṁkarite interpretation. One may naturally ask : How can we assert contradictory attributes in a substratum? Can we ever assert both the negation and its counterpositive in the same ground? This objection, as raised in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*,[1] is replied by Viṭṭhalanātha by asserting that

Viṭṭhalanātha's solution.

the standards of our empirical judgement are absolutely incapable of disclosing the truth about the transcendent and the essential nature of God or Brahman. When we deny the co-existence of contradictory attributes in one and the same substratum the basis of our judgement is always empirical perception for we never perceive such a phenomenon in ordinary human life. But if we extend this concept and standard to such a transcendent verity as Brahman how can the Advaitins ever declare that Brahman is indeterminate? We have never perceived any

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 146.

indeterminate existence in our lives. If the Advaitins can assert the truth of the indeterminate character of Brahman they should also agree to the co-existence of contradictory attributes in Brahman, the Absolute Reality, whose nature can be known only through *śrutis* or Revelation and not through the empirical means or cognition (*pramāṇas*). As we shall discuss subsequently in detail, the Vallabhites were strong protagonists of the view that Revelation [1] or the *śrutis* are the only valid source [2] of knowledge regarding the truth about the nature and essence of Brahman and that any application of our empirical and phenomenal concepts to Brahman who is both transcendent and immanent is both illegitimate and derogatory. This is why the Upaniṣads emphatically declare that this knowledge cannot be attained [3] through logic. The *śrutis*, according to Vallabha and his followers, at innumerable places make pointed reference to the fact that Brahman, in His essential nature, is the repository of contradictory attributes. Far from being a defect, this quality, in Brahman, is a kind of ornament [4] and a sign of His Infinite Greatness which is executed through His Māyā, a power or capacity. It is the nature of the Divine Ultimate Existence that It is capable of manifesting Itself in all kinds of forms as possible; Its dynamism has the power to transform Itself into innumerable and infinite formulations. To Vallabha who considers the whole cosmos as a real manifestation and transformation of Brahman, all this movement or becoming is an expression of His Greatness or *mahimā* [5] which means that He is capable of transforming or manifesting Himself in each and every form He likes (sarvabhavanasamartha) for His immense power [6] and capacities are inconceivable to the human mind. There is no reason for any doubt on this point; verily, did the *Bhāgavata* declare, "Don't be astonished for the Immutable is all wonders." [7]

Nature of Brahman knowable only through Revelation.

Viruddhadharmāśrayatva as essential nature of Brahman.

1. *Ibid*, p. 146
2. Vedādeva hi brahmasvarūpajñānaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 931) also *Prakāśa* on above p. 931.
3. Naiṣātarkeṇa matirāpaneyā. (*Kaṭhopaniṣad*, Mantra, 1, 2, 9).
4. Viruddhadharmāśrayatvaṁ tu brahmaṇo bhūṣaṇāya. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 121).
5. Mahimā eṣa puruṣasya.... asya etādṛśasya viruddhadharmāśrayamāhātmyasyāsmin bhagvatyevopalabdheḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra, 1.3.16).
6. Acintyaiśvaryavat vṛhat. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 55).
7. Mā maṁsthā hi etadāścaryaṁ sarvāścaryamaye acyute.
(*Śrīmadbhāgavata*, śloka, 1, 8, 16).

The idea of Brahman as possessing the power of every kind of manifestation is really the backbone of Vallabha's belief that He is the substratum [1] of all contradictory attributes. These two concepts thus form the basis and the foundation on which he erects his whole philosophical system and explains all the scriptural texts that seemingly appear to be opposed. The apparent opposition between the concepts of Brahman as Immutable and yet subject to becoming, as transcendent and yet the object of empirical cognition, as both the Immanent and the Instrumental Cause of the world-order, as both pervasive and residing in the hearts of all creatures, as both the greatest and the smallest — in fact all knotty philosophical problems — is explained by resorting to this specific and essential character of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality.

The inefficacy of the analytic and a-priori laws of logic, such as the Law of Contradiction and Law of Excluded Middle, that stem forth directly from our limited and partial mental-consciousness, in arriving at a true and integral vision of the essential nature of Reality had been recognised in the medieval Christian thought as well of which Cusanus is probably the best example. In his philosophical master-piece, *On Learned Unknowing*, he arrives at such conclusions about Divinity that bear a stamp of striking resemblance with the above teachings of Vallabha and his followers. To substantiate this claim we quote a passage from Prof. Collins book '*God in Modern Philosophy*'.

"The absolute maximum (God), not being confined to quantity or any other categorical order, can be defined as that which is in actuality everything which can possibly exist. Nothing can be placed in opposition to it, for it is one and it is all. All things are in it as the one, simple actuality, and it is in all things as their essence and actual being. For us, human beings, to see God means to see all as God and God as all. The absolute maximum embraces both the maximum limit, and the minimal limit, the greatest and the smallest, since it cannot be surpassed in any relative direction. Hence it reconciles within itself all the contrasts and opposites, even the contradictory ones.

It is of no avail for the Aristotelian-inspired philosophies to object that this violates the principle of contradiction, since this principle belongs to reason but not to intellect. It applies only to things at the finite level and is radically incapable of making any pronouncement about the infinite being..." [2]

1. Virodhastu sarvabhavanasamarthe brahmaṇi nāśaṅkanīya.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 1, 3, 21).
2. Collins, James. : *God In Modern Philosophy*, p. 6 to 7.

(C) BRAHMAN AS SACCIDĀNANDA

Saccidānanda as the *svarūpalakṣana* of Brahman.

With regard to Ultimate Reality or Brahman the problem that has always been agitating the minds of thinkers since the dawn of philosophical enquiry and search after truth in India has related itself to Its essential nature and the constitution of Its ultimate existence. What is actually the ultimate nature or *svarūpa* of Brahman? What ingredients constitute the ultimate character of the Final Truth? In the Upaniṣads, we generally come across a two-fold description and definition of Brahman : (1) *śrutis* that describe the real and ultimate nature of Brahman (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*) and (2) those *śrutis* that explain Him to be the ultimate cause and the ground of cosmic manifestation, the origination, maintenance and destruction of the world-order (*kārya-lakṣaṇa*). We are, however, concerned here primarily with the texts that reveal the real nature of Brahman or His *svarūpa* and shall later on dwell upon His character as the Final Cause.

In the Upaniṣads, the essential nature of Brahman is generally described as a tri-une Reality of Pure Existence, Pure Knowledge and Pure Bliss, the *Saccidānanda*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* we have such descriptions as, 'This endless infinite Reality is but Pure [1] Intelligence., Knowledge, Bliss, Brahman, the Supreme Goal of the dispenser of Wealth', 'It is the Truth of truth'. In the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, the Brahman is emphatically asserted as 'Truth, Knowledge and Infinity' [2] and subsequently it is disclosed that the real nature of Brahman is Bliss. 'He is Bliss. Having attained the Bliss this one becomes happy... That alone makes one blissful.' [3] Therefore, all the systems of Vedānta almost equivocally announce that the essential nature of Infinite Brahman consists in Its Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss notwithstanding their divergent views on the nature of the Divine Bliss. Vallabha too, like other Vaiṣṇavites, has a full faith in this *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* and emphasises with full vigour that the essential nature of Puruṣottama is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss wherein the Bliss constitutes the innermost depth and the secret of Divine Existence.

Though for Vallabha the description of Brahman as Truth, Knowledge and Bliss in the *śrutis* is itself a warranty of its truth and

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (11, IV, 12).
2. Satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma. (*Taittirīyopaniṣad* mantra, 2, 1).
3. Raso vai saḥ. Rasamhyevāyaṁlabdhvā ānandī bhavati... Eṣa hyevānandayāti.(*Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra, 2, 7).

certainty for which no other proof is required yet in his works an attempt is often made to establish the truth of the Judgement, 'Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss' on rational grounds. While commenting on the sūtra '*Tattusamanvayāt*',[1] Vallabha writes, "That Brahman is the *samavāyi-kāraṇa* because of Its immanence (agreement in presence). It is always present [2] as truth, knowledge and bliss manifested in such forms as 'existent', 'revealing' and 'dear'." The argument as developed by Śrī Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja in his *Prakāśa* finally takes the form : because the attributes of an inherent-cause (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*) are invariably transferred to its effects it is logically possible to infer the attributes of the cause on the basis of the experience of the attributes in the effect. Because Brahman, according to Vallabha, is an inherent - cause of the world-order his essential attributes are also revealed, though in a limited, finite and perverted form, in his phenomenal manifestations. Notwithstanding the innumerable variations in the characters of cosmic objects, three ingradients are invariably present, Firstly, all objects are known to be existent, secondly, they manifest themselves to knowledge and are supported by a foundational consciousness and, thirdly, they all reveal in their wake a feeling of satisfaction, happiness or delight; the cases of unhappiness, pain and evil being only 'contrary occurrences' temporarily suspending the normal states of happiness and satisfaction. The universal presence of the attributes of existence, consciousness and delight in all the phenomenal formulations of the cosmos leads to the logical conclusion that these three attributes are also present in Brahman, the inherent and immanent-cause, and constitute Its essential Divine nature.

Should we then understand that Existence, Consciousness and Bliss as available to us in phenomena and to our human, mental consciousness form the real nature of Brahman? Is the phenomenal manifestation of these attributes also a correct representation of the Transcendental Truth? The answer is a definite 'no'. Vallabha like other interpreters of Vedānta is quite unambiguous in asserting that the phenomenal appearances of three characters of Brahman — Existence, Consciousness and Bliss — are only their limited, transfigured and mutated aspects; in their transcendental essential status they are quite different. The three attributes of Brahman in Its essential transcendental

1. Tad brahmaiva samavāyikāraṇaṁ. Kutaḥ. Samanvayāt samyaganuvṛttatvāt. Asti bhāti priyatvena saccidānandarūpeṇānvayāt.
(*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 83).

2. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya* p. 83.

status are 'Pure Being', 'Pure Consciousness' and 'Pure Bliss'. In the words of Śrī Aurobindo, "The Pure being (*sat*) is a timeless, spaceless stability (*sthāṇu*), which is immutable, inexhaustible and unexpended, not acting, though containing all this action, not energy but Pure Existence; it is the fundamental foundational reality forming the background of all that appears as 'existent'. Likewise, 'Pure-Consciousness' is not our mental waking consciousness, generally associated with the *vṛttis* of *antaḥkaraṇa*, but a transcendental foundational consciousness — the prius of all conscious manifestation — inaccurately represented in phenomena; the Divine Pure Consciousness is all-pervading, infinite and unbounded. Bliss too is not the happiness or pleasure of our earthly mortals. Like universal consciousness, Pure Delight is also universal and is essentially different from the sensational pleasure of human beings; it is illimitable and self-existent, not dependent on any particular causes, the background of all backgrounds from which pleasure, pain and more mental experiences emerge."[1] It is essentially a positive state. The experience of worldly pleasure and pain, in all its various forms, according to Vallabha, is a conditioned appearance caused by ignorance or *avidyā*. In our worldly life the manifestation of delight is always subject to spatio-temporal limitations; a thing is liked[2] by a man at a time while disliked at another; he likes a thing at a particular place while is averse to it at another. This exhibits clearly the conditioned (*aupādhika*) character of all our mundane experiences of happiness and discomfort, pleasure and pain, which do not betray the real and eternal essence of bliss. The real love and bliss, according to Vallabhites — as described in the Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* — pertains to Ātman which is all-pervasive and is not-different from all that phenomenally exists. This essentially eternal, infinite and unconditioned (*nirupādhika*) Delight of Ātman or Brahman, as per Brahman's own wish, is subjected to spatio-temporal limitations and manifests itself in innumerable mundane forms and aspects.

As we shall discuss, in detail, while elaborating the Vallabhite theory of evolution, these three essential attributes of Brahman, Existence, Consciousness and Bliss form the ground and the basis of subsequent transformation and evolution of world-phenomena. As the evolution takes place, all the three attributes are gradually and successively revealed. The *sat* or Existence is revealed in Matter,

1. Śrī Aurobindo. : *Life Divine*, p. 92
2. *Prakāśa*, p. 84.

Consciousness [1] is revealed in souls and Bliss is manifested, though partly, in the *antaryāmin*; the full and the unlimited manifestation of Delight being possible only after the supreme realisation of Puruṣottama. What causes this world-evolution? To Vallabha, it is surely the Will [2] of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa for He is independent and all-powerful. Just by way of sport the Lord's wish initiates the process of evolution out of his own three essential transcendent and divine attributes. Though all the three attributes, Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss form the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality yet to Vallabha and his followers it is Pure Bliss that constitutes and demonstrates Its innermost kernel and the realisation of this Supreme Bliss should be the final aim and purpose of all life on this earth. In truth, Śrī Vallabha's philosophy, following the footprints of the *Bhāgavata*, is an exposition and elaboration of the blissful aspect of Brahman.

Brahman with His attributes is always determinate.

Here we should always be careful to bear in mind that Vallabha is always emphatic on the point that such adjectives as 'truth', 'consciousness', 'infinite' and 'bliss' used in the description and definition of Brahman are His real and essential attributes which form an identity with Him even in His transcendental status because Brahman, by nature, is always determinate and not indeterminate as the Śaṁkarites would like to maintain. The very idea of these terms as referring to an indeterminate Brahman, according to Vallabhites, is illogical for in this situation it would be impossible to explain their co-existence in an identical substratum (*samānādhi-karaṇa*). Brahman is not only determinate, He is an agent and the doer as well. The term 'infinite', according to Vallabha, stands for His unlimited, all-pervasive character. Notwithstanding His infinity and unlimitedness, Brahman by His mysterious and supra-logical power veils His infinity and appears in phenomena as limited in the forms of Matter and Soul.

The nature and status of Brahman's Pure Bliss had been a subject of heated controversy not only in the Post Śaṁkarite period but in the earlier times as well. It is evident from the *Brahmasūtra* that there existed two different points of view, the one stressing the absolute transcendence and attributeless character of Bliss and the other emphasising its attributive and differentiated character; the legacy

1. Jaḍajīvāntaryāmiṣu ekaikāṁśaprākaṭyāt. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 86).
2. Bhagavadicchāyā niyāmakatvāt. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 86).

Divergence of opinion regarding the nature of bliss.

of these divergent standpoints was acquired by Śaṁkara and antagonistic Vaiṣṇavite schools respectively as reflected in their interpretations of the *ānandamaya* section of the *Brahma sūtra*.

Śaṁkara's commentary on the eighth *sūtra* of the *ānandamayādhikaraṇa* reveals that the fundamental basis of his refusal to identify the *ānandamaya* with Absolute Brahman was his concept that *ānanda* or bliss in its manifested aspect as differentiated, attributive and consisting of parts is always phenomenal and does not represent [1] the noumenal aspect of Brahman which is always non-relative, undifferentiated, transcendental and absolute. Śaṁkara's clear and unequivocal argument that because *ānandamaya* or the Blissful is spoken of in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* as consisting of parts and because whatever may be the excellence and abundance of bliss it always carries with it some element of pain and sorrow, its counterpositive, the *ānandamaya* [2] is always determinate (*saviśeṣa*) and, therefore, phenomenal. The reference in this Upaniṣad about the body of the *ānandamaya* [3] too foretells that it cannot be deprived of the relational concepts of pleasure and pain, the agreeable and the disagreeable, meaning thereby that it is phenomenal, relational and not absolute. The Absolute Brahman and Its Bliss, therefore, transcends the *ānandamaya-sheath* which belongs to the same realm of phenomena as the other four sheaths, viz., the *annamaya*, the *prāṇamaya*, the *manomaya* and the *vijñānamaya*. Brahman is not the *ānandamaya*, the phenomenal manifestation of Bliss, but is the non-differentiated Absolute which is its support and the ultimate purport of the *Taittirīya-śruti*. Brahman being the tail and the support [4] should not be conceived as comprised of *ānandamaya* as Its part and, consequently, the real character of Brahman's Bliss is unimaginable in terms of logical concepts of the 'substance' and the 'attribute'. Its true being and nature can be realised only by Supreme Intuition or *Aparokṣānubhūti*.

Śaṁkara's position that *ānandamaya* is not the Supreme Brahman.

Brahman's Bliss inconceivable in terms of substance and attributes.

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on the sūtra (1, 1, 19).
2. Tasmāt kāryapatita evānandamayo na para evātmā.
   (Śaṁkara's commentary on mantra 2, 5)
3. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 5).
4. Brahmapucchampratiṣṭhā. (*Ibid*, mantra, 2, 5)

Vallabha, like the other Vaiṣṇavite opponents of Śaṁkara, asserted with certainty that the real and transcendental nature of Pure Bliss is not undifferentiated and indeterminate but is always determinate, differentiated and attributive and it is against the verdict of the *śrutis* to interpret *ānandamaya* either as the jīva or the Apara-Brahman. The Blissful or the *ānandamaya*, according to Vallabha, is the same as the Absolute Brahman; the Puruṣottama, with all His Infinite Divine attributes.

Vallabha – Pure Bliss is determinate, differentiated and attributive.

Vallabha's arguments in support of his above contention are almost the same as adopted by Rāmānuja in his *Śrībhāṣya* and as those occurring as the prima-facie view in Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Brahma sūtra*. To him, as to Rāmānuja, Brahman or Puruṣottama is *ānandamaya* because He is instructed in the *Taittirīya-śruti* as the innermost,[1] because the *śruti* repeatedly [2] refers to Him as the Blissful and because neither the individual-soul (*jīva*) nor the *Prakṛti* can be conceived, on the strength of the scriptures, as the substrate of *ānanda*. The Śaṁkarite objection that because there is a reference to the body [3] of the *ānandamaya* in the *śruti* it should not be identified with Absolute Brahman is irrelevant, because the possession of body is no justification for its relegation to the world of phenomena. What renders a body and its parts phenomenal is its belonging to *Prakṛti* and not to the mere fact that it possesses a body. To Vallabha, a body of pure *sattva* transcending all phenomena and its relations is not only conceivable but is also testified by *Śrīmadbhāgavata* and other scriptures. Śaṁkara's argument that because the suffix '*mayaṭ*' is used in *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* in the sense of *vikāra* or modification it should also be understood in the same sense while comprehending the meaning of *ānandamaya* — so that it is also a product and an effect — is decried by Vallabha on the ground that the suffix '*mayaṭ*' in *ānanda maya* stands for abundance (*prācurya*) [4] and not modification. As the Blissful is the innermost state different from

Vallabha's contention that *ānandamaya* is Absolute Brahman.

Refutation of Śaṁkara.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 178.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, (1, 1, 12).
3. Priyādyavayavayogāt, śārīratvaśravaṇācca.
   (*Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 36.)
4. *Anubhāṣya* on the *sūtra* (1, 1, 12).

the earlier ones there is no valid ground for interpreting the suffix *mayaṭ*, used in its depiction, in the sense of modification on the basis of the principle of similarity. The '*mayaṭ*' in *ānandamaya* is used only in the sense of abundance and plenitude (*prācurya*) as suggested by Rāmānuja [1] also. Another reason for the identification of *ānandamaya* as Brahman is the frequent reference in the Upaniṣadic-texts about the causality of Brahman in the production and manifestation of pleasure or happiness in the individual-souls. As the *Taittirīya*-text remarks, "He alone causes the bliss". Vallabha elaborates this point and argues that all the phenomenal and modified manifestations of pleasure and happiness are really caused by the *ānandmaya* or the Absolute Brahman. Just as the manifestation of Brahman in the form of world-phenomena does not disturb His transcendental and immutable status of Truth and Consciousness, the manifestation of His Bliss in the innumerable phenomenal creatures too does [2] not cause any sacrilege to the pure and immutable status of His Bliss. Thus the very fact that the Ultimate Reality or Brahman causes the happiness, pleasure and mirth in the whole gamut of phenomena justifies His difference from the individual-souls and warrants the truth of the statement that He alone is the substratum and the repository of Bliss that is pure and unlimited. As the *ānanda-maya* is the cause not only of the jīva's happiness but is also the cause of the functioning of all that phenomenally exists, right up from [3] the *annamaya* to the *vijñānamaya*, it would be absurd to identify it with the individual-soul which is never invested with the power of world-creation; it is only Brahman or Puruṣottama who is really the cause of world-phenomena in their divers aspects and as such He alone is the *ānanda maya* and not the jīva. The Sāṁkhya philosopher may argue that since the *Prakṛti* in its pure *sāttvika* status is blissful in character it would be proper to regard Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*) as *ānandamaya*. But this argument, according to Vallabha, is untenable because the *śruti* after the exposition of *ānandamaya* clearly mentions that 'He desired'.[4] But 'desire' or 'will' is possible

Brahman as the substratum of Pure Bliss

1. In his *Śrībhāṣya* Rāmānuja interprets *vijñānamaya* also in the same sense where 'mayaṭ' means *prācurya*. (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 1, 1, 13).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on *sūtra* 'Tadhetuvyapadeśācca' (1, 1, 13).
3. *Prakāśa*, p. 167.
4. Kāmācca nānumānāpekṣā (*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra, 1, 1, 17).

only in a conscious-principle [1] and not in the Unconscious-*Prakṛti*. As such the Blissful which according to the Upaniṣadic-text is conscious and intelligent can be no other than Brahman. Vallabha, therefore, like Rāmānuja and other Vaiṣṇavites asserts that the real intention of the author of the *Brahmasūtra* is to propagate the unlimited abundance of Pure Bliss in Brahman without falling in the trap of such mischievous philosophical statements that try to identify the Blissful with the subjective aspect of the enjoyment of the individual-soul.

Vallabha's interpretation of *annamaya* etc. as *vibhūtis* of Brahman and not *koṣas*.

One may pause a little to ponder : Why did Śaṁkara misinterpret the *Brahmasūtra* in such a way as to identify seven out of the eight *sūtras* of the *ānandamayādhikaraṇa* aṣ constituting the prima-facie view and only one for the *siddhānta*? The reason, according to the Vallabhites, lies in Śaṁkara's grave misapprehension that *annamaya* etc. are the inner [2] subjective sheaths (*koṣas*) of the individual. To Vallabha they are not the sheaths but the cosmic phenomenal manifestations (*vibhūtis*) [3] of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, that are represented both in their universal and individual aspects; the first four, viz., the *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* are the *vibhūtis* whereas the *ānandamaya* is Brahman Himself.

The *annamaya* is Brahman's evolution or manifestation [4] in the form of universal Matter and its individual aspect, the human-body; the *prāṇamaya* is the vital breath both as the all-pervasive air and the five types of breath operating within the human body for such important physical functions as food-consumption and excretion of waste-matter. The *manomaya* is Brahman's manifestion in the form of Veda or Śabda. As explicitly mentioned in the *Bhāgavata*, the Lord [5] manifesting Himself gradually as *parā*, *paśyanti* and *madhyamā* ultimately took the form of *Vaikharī* speech and represented Himself in the letters,

1. Ataḥ cetana eva ānandamayaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, on the above sūtra).
2. Tasmānna ete koṣāḥ kiñtu pañcāpi phalarūpā vyāpakā bhinnāḥ. (*Prakāśa*, p. 208).
3. Tatra siddhante caturṇāṁ vibhūtitvaṁ, pañcamasya parapuruṣarūpatvāt paramaphalatvaṁ. (*Prakāśa*, p. 208).
4. *Prakāśa*, on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 206.
5. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (XI, 12, 17). See also Śrīdhara's commentary on this śloka.

words and sentences of the four Vedas. The *manomaya*, therefore, is the cosmic-manifestation or the *vibhūti* of Brahman in the form of the Vedas. The fourth or the *vijñānamaya* is that aspect of His manifestation in which there is an abundance [1] of knowledge which leads to the acquisition and relationship with the *ānandamaya* or the Blissful.

It is one of the principles of Vallabhite theology that the worship of the different *vibhūtis* leads to different results or fruits. The *Taittirīyopaniṣad* clearly lays down that the worship of *annamaya* or the Brahman manifested [2] in the form of *anna* or Matter leads to the acquisition of all kinds of external mundane enjoyments, the worship of *prāṇamaya* to the attainment of the full span of life of one hundred years. The worship of the Vedas and all Vedic literature or the *manomaya* aspect [3] of Brahman provides the aspirant the knowledge of Brahman and His Blissful character and thereby he is rendered free from all kinds of fears. The *vijñānamaya*, the fourth *vibhūti* of the Lord, is worshipped [4] for the sake of obtaining all kinds of celestial enjoyments (*pāralaukika-bhogas*) by means of the performance of the various kinds of *yajñas*. The performance of these *yajñas* purifies the *antaḥkaraṇa* of the performer and emancipates him from all kinds of sins and thereby the worshipper of the *vijñānamaya* aspect of Brahman is led to the attainment of all that is desired; thus the satisfaction of all types of desires is the reward and the consummation of the *upāsanā* of the *vijñānamaya* Brahman.

By worshipping the above four kinds of *vibhūtis*, in succession, the worshipper is ultimately led to the *ānandamaya* which is the real essence (*svarūpa*) of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman; the *ānandamaya* is not a manifestation (*vibhūti*) but Brahman Himself. The fact of the transendcence of this state, as suggested in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, [5] is indicative, not of the transcendence of the *ānandamaya* but of the truth that the Pure-Bliss is the fruit of the attainment of the *ānandamaya*

Ānandamaya is not a *vibhūti* but Brahman Himself.

1. Vijñāṇamaya iti vijñānapracuraḥ. (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 205).
2. Sarvaṁ vai te annamāpnuvanti ye annaṁbrahmopāsate. (*Taittirīya-upaniṣad*, mantra 2, 2).
3. Tadanu vaidika vyavahāraḥ. Sa ca manomayaḥ puruṣaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 205).
4. *Prakāśa*, p. 206.
5. Etamānandamayamātmānaṁupasaṁkrāmati. (*Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra, 2, 8).

or Brahman. Vallabha and his followers, thus assert that the tri-une reality of Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss is the essential and the real nature of Brahman in which Pure Bliss constitutes the innermost core. As we shall discuss later on, in detail, the Akṣara Brahman whose realization is the ultimate end of the path of knowledge, is not the *summum-bonum* of human existence because of the limited manifestation of *ānanda* in this state; the *summum-bonum* is the Puruṣottama with His unlimited and effulgent Bliss whose realization and knowledge becomes possible only after the *jñānis*, by the Grace of the Lord, take to the path of devotion or *bhakti*. The term 'parama-vyoma' in the *Taittirīya-mantra*, according to Vallabha, stands for the Akṣara-Brahman in which is revealed the Blissful aspect of Brahman, the Puruṣottama.

Brahman's real nature is knowable through sipritual experience and not logic.

It may be recalled that the real nature of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman as discussed above is, according to Vallabha, essentially a matter of spiritual experience [1] and not an object of human discursive knowledge or flight of logic. Logic, as Vallabha has repeatedly remarked, is absolutely incapable of disclosing the real nature of the Ultimate Being; Its nature as Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss can be realized only through direct spiritual experience or intuition whose occurrence is a result of the Lord's Wish and Grace, caused by the intensity of devotion or *bhakti*.

(D) BRAHMAN AS PERSONAL, INDIVIDUAL AND CONCRETE

The foregoing discussion about the nature of Brahman as a positive, differentiated and attributive Reality with *saccidānanda* as its true description may reveal the basic Vallabhite contention that the Ultimate Reality, the Brahman, is fundamentally not only a Concrete Absolute but is also Personal and Individual. The idea of Impersonal Reality is a necessary appendage to the concept of the undifferentiated character of Ultimate Truth to which the Śaṁkarites have always endeavoured to cling. Vallabha, on the other hand, vigorously argued that because Brahman is Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Delight and countless other attributes it is always wise to think of Him as an Individual and a Personality. The Vedas and the

1. Atastādṛśasyānubhavaikavedyatvāt. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 275).

Brahman on Individual and Personality.

Upaniṣads have such passages in abundance that are suggestive of the personal character of Brahman. The *Puruṣasūkta* describes Him as one having thousand heads, thousand eyes and thousand legs, the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is repeatedly assertive of His being of the form of Puruṣa (*puruṣavidhatā*), the XIth Canto of the *Bhāgavata* narrates in detail His Universal Personal Form and the skandha II of the *Bhāgavata*, considered as a lucid commentary and exposition of the *Puruṣasūkta*, is an unequivocal and emotional formulation of the philosophy of Personal God.

While emphasising the Personal and the formal character of Brahman, Vallabha and his followers argue that because the Blissful (*ānandamaya*) is the innermost state the appearance of form in all other outward states and manifestations upto the *annamaya* is caused by the form [1] and the personality of the *ānandamaya* or the Brahman. The truth of this argument is testified by the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* when it, while suggesting the personal form [2] of the *prāṇamaya,* establishes on its basis the *puruṣavidhatva* of the *annamaya*. Puruṣottama, therefore, unambiguously asserts that had there been no form [3] of Brahman as Puruṣa there would never have been any form or *puruṣavidhatva* in all other *vibhūtis* or manifestations such as *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya* etc. Brahman is, therefore, sākāra (possessing form) and not only nirākāra (formless) as contended by the Śaṁkarites.

The opponent may however, argue that because the idea of 'form' is always relative to the idea of 'body', the philosophy of divine form must also agree to the existence of a Divine Body, a conclusion detrimental to the fundamental belief that the Ultimate Reality or God is eternal. The propagator of the doctrine of divine form is, therefore, caught in between the two horns of the dilemma of either accepting the corporeality of Brahman with its necessary consequences or relinquishing the doctrine of Divine Form and Personality for ever.

In Rāmānuja's philosophy this argument is easily confuted by declaring that the opponent's objection relates only to physical and

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa*, p 202.
2. *Ibid.*,
3. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 203.

prākṛtika body and not to the celestial *aprākṛtika* body of Brahman which consists [1] of His infinite, transcendental, divine and inherent attributes and which He always adopts at His Will. But with Vallabha the position is a little different for he discards outright the very conception [2] of Brahman's possessing a body either physical (*prākṛtika*) or celestial (*aprākṛtika*) on the ground that this would ultimately equate Him with the jiva or the individual-soul.

Śrī Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja has elaborately discussed this point in his *Prakāśa*. He argues : If Brahman has body, is it *aprākṛtika*[3] (celestial), *prākṛtika* (consisting of the *guṇas* such as *sattva* etc.) or is only *māyika*? The idea of Brahman possessing an *aprākṛtika* body is irrelevant because Brahman which in Vallabha's philosophy is also an agent is not in need of any accessory condition; He Himself is capable of creating out of Himself, according to His own Will. Vallabha, therefore, remarked, "For [4] Brahman, the All-creator, what is there unavailable that we should imagine of a body for Him?" Moreover, if this body is eternal it would contradict the verdict of the *śruti* 'that there was only *sat* or Brahman'. On the other hand, even if one were to imagine that Brahman's body consists of pure *sattva* [5] then it would be difficult to deny the existence of ego in Him for 'ego' is always related to a body, be it of any form; the very fact of being in relation to the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* constitutes the ego or *abhimāna*. Thus, the conclusion is inevitable that if Brahman possesses a body He is the same as the jīva. Vallabha and his followers thus demonstrate that the idea of a 'body' is inconsistent with the philosophy of Saccidānanda Brahman, as preached in their school, for to them He transcends [6] all contacts with the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*, is always independent and is cramped up with all the mysterious divine powers and glory. Brahman is, therefore, *aśarīrī* (without a body) in his original poise of Being (*mūlarūpa*).

Vallabhite refutation of the concept that Brahman possesses a body.

1. *Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 'Antastaddharmopadeśāt' (1, 1, 21).
2. Sarire sati jivatvameveti niścayaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 299).
3. *Prakāśa*, p. 227.
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 'Antastaddharmopadeśāt'. p. 227.
5. *Prakāśa*, p. 229.
6. *Prakāśa*, p. 229.

Now the question arises : If Brahman has no body, why are there such scriptural passages that are indicative of His possessing a body? According to Vallabha, such passages only refer to the form of Brahman as revealed to His devotees for in whatever form the devotees meditate upon Him [1] in that very form He manifests and presents Himself to them. Moreover to those who are unworthy of liberation His manifestation as possessing a body is only illusorily created for [2] their delusion and is without any reality. This illusory manifestation is only caused by the *māyā* of Brahman; it does not imply that Brahman is *māyika* [3] or is the creator of this illusion.

To Vallabha, the concept of Lord's body, wherever employed in the scriptures, is indicative only of His *svarūpa* [4] (essence) or of His divine attributes, for in the nuances of his philosophy there is no difference between Brahman and His attributes. Thus, notwithstanding his denunciation of Lord's body in His original poise or *mūlarūpa* Vallabha is repeatedly assertive that Brahman has always [5] a form (*ākāra*). The form of Viṣṇu actually [6] stands for possessing Consciousness and Delight. As laid down in *Nārada Pāñcarātra* [7], "His hand, feet, face and belly are comprised of only Bliss" and as such what the Vallabhites intend by asserting the form and the body of the Lord is the fact that both He and His body are Pure Delight. This *ānandamaya* form of Brahman is the source of all formal appearances in phenomena just as He is the only source and ground of their manifestation; therefore, the Vallabhites emphatically assert that Bliss is productive of form. [8]

Another argument employed by the Vallabhites for establishing the formal and personal character of Brahman takes recourse to such of His attributes that are considered in his philosophy as His specific and

1. Yad yad dhiyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti.
   Tad tad vapuḥ praṇayase sadanugrahāya. (*Bhāgavata*, śloka, 3, 9, 11.)
2. *Prakāśa*, p. 227.
3. Kintu lilayā vyāmohanārthamanyathā bhāsayeta naṭavat, (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 227).
4. Vapuḥ svarūpaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 229).
5. Sarvatra sākārameva brahma itimantavyaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 230).
6. Amohāya guṇāh viṣṇoh ākāraḥ ciccharīratā.
   (T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 58).
7. Anandamātrakarapādamukhodarādiḥ.
8. Ānando brahmavāde ākārasamarpakaḥ. (T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p.139).

Proof of Brahman's Form and Personality on the basis of *asādhāraṇa-dharmas*.

particular qualities (*asādhāraṇa-dharmas*). These *asādhāraṇa-dharmas* as revealed in various Upaniṣad-texts, are: (1) the quality of transcending all sins meaning *inter alia* that He is not the least affected by any kind of *karma* whatsoever (*apahatapāpamatva*) (2) that He has the attribute of being the essence of all phenomenal existents as revealed by *Chāndogya-śruti* 'All taste, All Odour etc.', (3) that He possesses the quality of being the substrate of all kinds of contradictory attributes. (4) that He being the Ultimate Cause and Ground is present in His cosmic and phenomenal manifestations and has the quality of encompassing and preserving the whole cosmos in His bosom (*sarvātmyatva*) and (5) that He is absolutely infinite meaning thereby that He possesses the attribute of the transcendence of the three types of finitude — finitude due to space, time and substance.

These are some of the important attributes (*dharmas*) that are conceived and experienced by the sages as pertaining to Brahman alone and they do not pass on into the relative phenomena during the course of evolution. It is a striking feature of the Vallabhite notion of material or inherent causality that some of the qualities and features of the cause are not transferred to the effect just as some of the attributes of the effect are not acquired by the cause at the time of dissolution. These extraordinary and special attributes of the cause which exist only in Him are more powerful, in comparison to the attributes of the effect because they are eternal and are causative [1] of the existence of the attributes of the effect. Therefore, the Vallabhites argue that the presence of such extraordinary and special attributes that are possible only in Brahman and are identical with Him assign to Him a distinct form and personality where the form is indistinguishable from Him as the sunlight is from the sun.

This defence of the philosophy of Form may be misconstrued as a total denunciation of the doctrine of Indeterminate-ness and Formless-ness with regard to Brahman. But Vallabha would strike a note of warning. To him Brahman, who is all-powerful, may as per His own Wish, enter into a poise of Being which is an absolute state of Formless-ness, a state which is a

Brahman as both *Sākāra* and *Nirākāra* – Vallabha's explanation.

1. Upajīvyatvena nityatvena ca kāraṇa dharmasya baliṣṭhatvāt. (*Prakāśa*, p. 225).

transcendence and negation of all phenomenal and relative attributes. Thus, according to him, Brahman is both *nirākāra*-in the sense [1] of the denial of phenomenality-and *sākāra*-in the sense of possessing infinite and unlimited attributes by which He reveals Himself to His devotees with different forms and appearances and at the same time. This variegated and co-eval revelation is a special power of Brahman. To the question as to how Brahman is both Formless and with Form, Vallabha, quoting the *Brahmasūtra*, replies that just as a serpent, as per its own wish, may at one moment rest in a coiled-state while the very next moment it may be elongated, Brahman may also in one of His poises be formless while in the other and even simultaneously be the substrate of infinite virtues and qualities. The difference between the analogy of the serpent and Brahman lies in the fact that whereas the serpent cannot be both coiled and straight at one moment Brahman, who is the repository [2] of contradictory attributes and possesses infinite, inexplicable and mysterious powers, is evidently quite capable of being so. According to Vallabha, all the *śrutis*, the *smṛtis* and other scriptures unequivocally assert that Brahman is both *nirākāra* (formless) and *sākāra* (with form) and the truth of this statement can be vouchsafed, not by logic or ratiocination, but by supreme spiritual experience. The same note is struck by Śrī Aurobindo when he emphasises, while discussing the dichotomy between the *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* aspects of Brahman, that 'the Overmind consciousness maintains equally these two truths of the Eternal which face the mind as mutually exclusive alternatives; it admits both as supreme aspects of one Reality; somewhere, then, behind them there must be a still greater Transcendence [3] which originates them or upholds them both in its Supreme Eternity.' [4]

(E) BRAHMAN – THE CAUSE OF WORLD-ORDER

The majority of the inheritors of Upaniṣadic thought and vision including the exponents of Uttara-Mīmāṁsā are almost unanimous in

1. Sākāraṁ nirākāraṁ ca. Tathā ca śrutismṛtyukta saṁrādhakapratyakṣānurodhenārthabale vicārite api nirākāraṁ sākāraṁ ca siddhyati. (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 926).
2. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 932.
3. For Vallabha this may be Brahman's *Viruddhadharmāśrayatva*.
4. Śrī Aurobindo : *Life Divine*, p. 282 to 283.

Kāryalakṣaṇa śrutis are descriptive of Brahman's real attributes.

their conviction that Brahman is both the efficient and the immanent cause of the world-order to which Vallabha was also no exception. The description of Brahman in the Upaniṣads as the one from which the whole cosmos originates, in which it is sustained and to which it ultimately returns is acknowledged by Vallabha as the real definition of Brahman and not only a description of an adventitious property of *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* as Śaṁkara would make us believe. The *Brahmasūtra* is quite unambiguous when it defines Brahman by the *sūtra* '*Janmādyasya yataḥ*'[1] that the *kārya-lakṣaṇa-śruti* is descriptive of the real attributes and functions of Brahman and it is as valid a definition of Brahman as the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa-śruti* such as 'Brahman is Truth, Consciousness and Infinity', a contention drawing its support from the *Bhāgavata*[2] also. To the followers of this faith there is no valid reason for the argument that this definition pertains to the lower or the *Apara-Brahman* or is employed for the justification of seeking an illusory or inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) reality of the effect, the world-order. Vallabha, like Rāmānuja and others, has no mental reservation about the truth of Brahman's real causality *vis a vis* a real world-creation which, as explained by him, is a manifestation or deployment at His will out of His own Nirguṇa-Self— a doctrine of evolution based on the theories of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) and concealment (*tirobhāva*) and Immutable-transformation (*avikṛtapariṇāmavāda*). Brahman, the *nirguṇa* and not *saguṇa*, is thus both the instrumental and the inherent-cause of the world-order (*abhinnanimittopādāna*). As we shall revert to this theme, in detail, in our chapter on 'Causality' we are suspending our discussion on it for the present.

Brahman the real cause of a real world-creation.

(F) BRAHMAN AS THE KARTĀ (AGENT)

The concept of the instrumental-causality of Brahman has evoked an interesting discussion among the various interpreters of Vedānta. The assertion that Brahman is the agent or the creator (*kartā*) of this magnificient universe, inconceivable in every respect to the

1. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (1, 1, 2).
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (1, 1, 1).

human mind, naturally raises a doubt : Does this instrumental causality refer to the ultimate trans-relational and transcendental aspect of Brahman whose nature is described in the *nirguṇa-śrutis* or merely to his phenomenal manifestation or *saguṇa* aspect which is the Īśvara or the Apara-Brahman of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta? Śaṁkara, as we know, was abhorrent of associating the concept of agency or *kartṛtva* with the ultimate, absolute and unconditioned aspect of Brahman simply on the ground that *kartṛtva* being a phenomenal and relative concept is logically unimaginable in an absolute status of Being. Therefore, for explaining the causality and creation of the universe he conceived of an Apara-Brahman or Īśvara which, according to him, is really the material and the instrumental cause of world-creation; To him, the law of causality, being a logical and phenomenal category, is intelligible only with regard to Īśvara and not Brahman that transcends [1] categories of human intellect. He, therefore, declared that the definition of Brahman as the cause (and therefore the agent) of the origin, sustenance and destruction of the world-order, as occurring in the *Brahmasūtra* and the Upaniṣads, is only an accidental or a modal definition and not a description of Its real and absolute nature (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*).

Śaṁkara's denunciation of Brahman's agency in world-creation.

In his refutation of the philosophy of world-creatorship of Brahman Śaṁkara was moved by certain other considerations that tilted the balance heavily in favour of his denunciation. Firstly, the concept of agency or *kartṛtva* is always relative to the concept of activity (*kriyā*) and its object (*karma*) implying thereby that any association of this idea with Brahman would negate Its monistic character disregarding the verdict of the *śruti* that Brahman is non-dual (*advaita*). Secondly, the Vedas and the scriptural-texts very often describe Brahman as self-satisfied, perfect and without any want (*āptakāma*). If He is really the creator of a real world-order, what desire and imperfection has impelled Him to undertake the creation of such a stupendous magnitude? As desire is always related to a want, the doctrine of Brahman's creatorship would ultimately result in His imperfection;

The Śaṁkarite thesis that Apara, and not Para, Brahman is the world-cause.

1. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 210.

it is, therefore, wise, according to Śaṁkara, to relegate this concept only to the *vyāvahārika* order of existence by relating it to the concept of Īśvara, the Apara-Brahman and not to Para-Brahman. Thirdly, if Brahman, in His transcendental aspect, be really the creator and the material-cause of the cosmic-universe, one may be tempted to question whether in the process of transformation (*pariṇāma*) the whole of Brahman undergoes evolution or only a part of Him. The first alternative would mean that Brahman sheds off His original nature and acquires another and the second would destroy His part-less (*niravayava*) character. Thus the very notion of creatorship would ultimately contradict such scriptural texts that announce Him to be *avikṛtasvabhāva* and *niravayava*. The fourth and the most important objection relates to the problem of evil. If Brahman in His transcendental aspect be really the cause and creator of the world, why should He have, with all His omniscience and omnipotence, created such a wretched world abounding in dissatisfaction, disgust, failure, hatred, horror, disharmony and all sorts of evils? If being really omniscient and omnipotent He creates such an obnoxious world, it would be difficult for any philosopher to defend Him against the charge that He is cruel and partial. Though Śaṁkara has erected a fortification of defence against these charges in his various commentaries, he is particularly careful that the defence has a meaning only with regard to Brahman's phenomenal [1] or conditioned aspect and not with regard to His transcendental or the *nirguṇa* Being, which is fundamentally dissociated with any idea of creator-ship or *kartṛtva*.

The history of the Vaiṣṇavite reaction against Śaṁkara's philosophy evidently discloses the wrath and the sense of condemnation with which the Śaṁkarite denunciation of Brahman's agency was received by the masters of the Vaiṣṇavite cults. The cudgel that was taken up by Rāmānuja against Śaṁkara on this issue was upheld and wielded with full force and dexterity by other thinkers and exponents of Vaiṣṇavism including Vallabha and his followers who denounced the very wisdom of conceiving a double order and status of Brahman, viz., the *Para* and the *Apara*. To him the Upaniṣadic-texts and other scriptures nowhere provide an inkling of such a possibility. Whenever they undertake a description of Brahman, who is one, eternal, ultimate,

1. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 209.

transcendental and absolute Reality they refer always to Him in His *nirguṇa* aspect; it is the *Nirguṇa-Brahman* who is really the instrumental and the inherent cause of world-creation and is described in the *śrutis* as the creator, the ruler and the *antaryāmin*. Vallabha, therefore, subscribes to the view that *kartṛtva* really pertains to *Nirguṇa-Brahman* who is the real cause and the causative principle of all happenings and movements in the cosmos.

Vallabha's argument that *Nirguṇa*, not *Saguṇa*, *Brahman* is the real cause of world.

In his *Aṇubhāṣya*, Vallabha, on the authority of the *Brahmasūtra*, emphatically demonstrates that while speaking about the agency of Brahman the *śrutis* have always in mind the *nirguṇa* and not the *saguṇa* Brahman for the simple reason that the *saguṇa* being always contaminated by the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* is not at all independent. For Vallabha the very concept of *kartṛtva* or agency has 'independence' as its important term which is altogether absent in all the forms and modes of *saguṇatva*.

Complete independence possible only in *Nirguṇa-Brahman*.

As such, it is the *Nirguṇa Brahman* which transcends all the attributes of *Prakṛti* and has the rightful claim to independence as well as *kartṛtva*. The *Aitareyopaniṣad* clearly asserts that the Ātman, which alone was existent before, created the different worlds. On the basis of the *Brahmasūtra* Vallabha is emphatic on the point that reference to Ātman in the *śrutis* is always to the transcendental or the *nirguṇa* character of Brahman. When the Upaniṣads describe the nature of *Nirguṇa-Brahman* as imperceptible (free from name and form), as without body, as ineffable and indissoluble or as 'not-this', 'not-this' they intend not a total denial or negation of all kinds of attributes, as the Śaṁkarites pretend, but only a negation of phenomenal attributes or *prāpañcika-dharmas*. It is a contention of Vaiṣṇavism in general that Brahman being determinate and attributive in nature can never be transcendental in the Śaṁkarite sense; His transcendence implies simply the transcendence of all the *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*. In His pristine glory, His plenary light and powers, His omniscience, omnipotence and eternal and infinite Goodness has nowhere been disowned in any of the scriptural-texts. Vallabha, therefore, asserts that *Nirguṇa-Brahman* is really the creator or the author of the universe.

The Śaṁkarite objection that the concept of *kartṛtva* being a phenomenal and relative concept involving the difference between the doer, the work and the work-object is logically unimaginable in the absolute status of Being is fraught with a grave misunderstanding which equates 'phenomenal agency' with the transcendental and trans-empirical (*alaukika*) agency of Brahman. The argument that *kartṛtva* is an after-effect of the superimposition of body etc. may be justifiable in case of phenomenal agency but it is absolutely irrelevant so far as the Divine Agency is concerned. The *alaukika-kartṛtva* of Brahman is ascertainable only on the basis of the *śruti* and not through any empirical *pramāṇa* whatsoever. Just as 'Existence, Knowledge and Bliss' persist in Brahman as His attributes similarly *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* (enjoyer-ship), which are also His attributes, are sustained in Him without involving any contradiction with His *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* or essential definition.

Brahman's agency is divine and not phenomenal.

The objection that the attribution of real-agency and creatorship of real-world to Brahman would entail the presence of a want doing violence to his self - satisfied nativity (*āpta-kāmatva*) is also based on the misunderstanding about the propelling purpose behind creation. As we shall discuss, in detail, in the subsequent chapters of this work, Bādarāyaṇa, has demonstrated, at length, in his *Brahmasūtra* that all creation [1] is a sport of the Lord which is motivated not by any desire or purpose but simply out of His Wish to manifest himself and enjoy in the deployings of His inscrutable and miraculous powers. Any position of the real *kartṛtva* in Brahman, thus, does no violence to His immaculate nature of self-satisfaction (*āptakāmatva*). The philosophy of creation as a sport of Brahman also dispenses with the charge of cruelty and partiality. The important Vallabhite contention in this regard, as we shall observe, is the doctrine of self-creation (*ātmasṛṣṭi*) asserting the truth that the same immutable Brahman evolves Himself as cause and effect. The charge of cruelty and partiality holds some ground in such

Rebuttal of argument through want.

Other charge-refuted.

The doctrine of *Ātmasṛṣṭi*.

1. Lokavattulīlākaivalyam. *Brahmasūtra* (2, 1, 33) with *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 601.

theologies that conceive of God as an extra-cosmic transcendent Being but in a philosophy that regards Him transcendental as well as immanent the objection is quite irrelevant. The very concept of immanence involving God in the process of creation or manifestation, born merely out of sport, is an indictment of the validity of this charge for no one would be cruel or partial to himself. The feeling that Brahman is cruel and partial is a product of our limited and ignorant mental apprehension lacking the intuitive universal-consciousness that alone can reveal things in their right perspective. Thus following the foot-prints of Bādarāyaṇa, Vallabha declares that there is no valid reason for doubting the creator-ship of the *Nirguṇa-Brahman*.

Dialectical refutation of Śaṁkarite opposition to Brahman's *kartṛtva*.

Besides the above positive approach and reasoning in favour of Brahman's agency the Vallabhites take resort to negative dialectics for dismantling the Śaṁkarite thesis. They ask : If *Nirguṇa-Brahman* is not the creator[1] of the world-order who else is the creator? Is it the Brahman conditioned by *māyā* or *avidyā* or is it the jīva or the *Prakṛti*? The jīva (individual-soul) being an ignorant *aṁśa* (part) of the Lord whose bliss-portion and real latent powers are unmanifested is quite unworthy and powerless to undertake the creation of such a mighty universe. Moreover, he being dependent on Brahman is not independent which is a necessary condition for real *kartṛtva*. The *Prakṛti*, on the other hand, is devoid of intelligence without which the very idea of agency is inconceivable. Thus the only possibility is to take resort to the doctrine that the real *kartṛtva* belongs to Brahman as conditioned by *māyā* or *avidyā*, the main plank of the Śaṁkarite gospel. But as we shall discuss in the relevant chapters of this book, the Vallabhites have disputed and proved erroneous the very concepts of *māyā* and *avidyā* as advocated by the Śaṁkarites; no conditioning of the *pāramārthika* or the absolute aspect of *Nirguṇa-Brahman* by *māyā* or *avidyā* can arrogate to Him the creator-ship of universe. Thus, to the Vallabhites, there is no possibility of doubt about the real doer-ship of the *Nirguṇa-Brahman*. As remarked by Mr. Telivala, "*Kartṛtva* is as real an attribute of Brahman as truth (*satya*) is, and like *satya* it is also revealed from the Vedas. Obviously, there is no valid reason for the denying of activity in Brahman. On the contrary,

1. Telivala, M.T. : *Śuddhādvaita Brahmavāda*, p. 30.

the denial of activity in Brahman not only degenerates the ancient conception of Brahman as possessed of knowledge and action, the one aspect being revealed from the Vyāsa-sūtras while the other from the Jaimini-sūtras, but it completely results in a sort of queer atheism by refusing to acknowledge and sing the highest glory of the eternal divine-maker."[1]

Doctrine of Brahman as enjoyer.

Closely associated with the philosophy of the agency of supreme Brahman is the theory that he is also an enjoyer (*bhoktṛtva*) which is drawn almost as a corollary from the former. This idea may appear rather strange and incongruous in view of the general human experience that enjoyment is an empirical condition, always fraught with happiness and grief, whose association with the supreme transcendent Being will be an augury of a blatantly preposterous metaphysics. As Śaṁkara would object, the ideas of *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva*[2] are a result of false super-imposition caused by *avidyā* and are, in reality, akin to the practical activities of a man in dream. Moreover, because enjoyment and grief, happiness and sorrow, are always a result of good and bad deeds they can be conceived of only in an individual-soul and not in Brahman. Any talk of Brahman as an enjoyer is, to Śaṁkara, an obviously foolish contention.

Śaṁkara's objection.

Nature of Brahman's enjoyment.

Vallabha is quite in agreement with Śaṁkara that phenomenal and empirical enjoyment is non-attributable to Brahman for diverse reasons. In his commentary on the sūtra '*sambhogaprāptiriti cenna vaiśeṣyāt*' Vallabha demonstrates that there are certain qualities present in Brahman by which He is singularly different from the jīva. These qualities, according to him, are His ubiquitous character, His absolute[3] independence in activity and His nature as an all effulgent Delight. Because the enjoyment of pleasure and pain are, by nature, relative in character they are inadequate in effecting the Personality of Brahman whose all-pervasive character, the independence of activity and the presence of unlimited Bliss justify the impossibility and illegitimacy of the contention that He can be effected by any earthly pleasure

1. *Ibid*, p. 33.
2. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, 74.
3. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 297.

or pain. The feeling of pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow, are, therefore, associated only with the individual-soul (jīva) and not Brahman. Yet this does not mean a denial of Brahman's enjoyment. As in Him this mighty and stupendous universe merges at the time of world-dissolution, as in Him during the state of deep-sleep all the activities of the soul find rest, He is called in the Upaniṣads "the eater whose morsels are 'death', the Brāḥmaṇa and the Kṣattriya." He during the course of this eating certainly enjoys the manifestations of His own Bliss. The enjoyment of Brahman, therefore, according to Vallabha, is not natural and empirical (*laukika*) but is supernatural (*alaukika*)and celestial. The objection that no enjoyment in Brahman is possible has relevance with 'phenomenal enjoyment' and not with the divine and celestial *bhoktṛtva*. We shall, however, discuss the nuances of this supreme spiritual experience while elaborating the relationship of the individual-soul, after liberation, with Puruṣottama, a manifestation in which both God and the devotee are the terms of the manifestation of Pure Delight in His Eternal Sport.

From the above discussion on the Vallabhite doctrine of *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* of Brahman it may be clear that their emphasis on their divine and preternatural character is inexplicable on grounds of pure logic : their justification is sought only on the basis of the *śrutis* and scriptures. The most important argument explicative of all such logical and rational difficulties is the Vallabhite foundational theory that Brahman or God, as we have seen, is the repository of contradictory attributes and is capable of manifesting Himself in all sorts of ways. On account of this basic and essential attribute of Brahman there is no inconsistency in attributing to Him both activity and enjoyment, the two important characters of His Personality.

The opponent may, however, argue that if the Supreme Brahman be really a subject, a doer and an agent, He should be endowed with some sense (*indriya*) or means of knowledge and activity. But the acknowledgement of senses in Brahman would ultimately destroy the monistic position implying the futility of the doctrine of Brahman's activity. Vallabha meets this objection by questioning the very basis of this doctrine which conceives [1] of the activity of God on human analogy. To him, Brahman is without senses (*nirindriya*) yet He is an agent for the *śruti* declares that 'He moves and takes without [2] any legs and

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 1, 31).
2. Apāṇipādo javano grahītā (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, mantra, 3, 19).

hands', that 'He has neither any eyes nor ears'.[1] that His 'effects[2] and instruments, are unknown'. Those who contend that activity without instruments and senses is impossible forget that in matters divine and transcendental *śruti* or the Word is the only means of apprehension which should be followed literally as far as possible. Brahman the repository of contradictory attributes with His immense potentialities and infinite powers is quite possible of being an agent even without any *indriya* (sense).

(G) BRAHMAN AS AN OBJECT

Nirguṇa Brahman as object.

Our discussion in the foregoing pages has revealed that for Vallabha the *nirguṇa* and not *saguṇa* Brahman is the real portrayal of the ultimate nature of the Essence or Being and that the theory of the two B ahmans — the *Para* and the *Apara* — is a gross misrepresentation of the true intention and the import of the *śrutis*. Brahman is only one and He in His absolute and ultimate status is always *nirguṇa*. What is the status and position of *saguṇa* Brahman? What is the status of Brahman as an object of our knowledge, devotion and our religious activity? Should we finally take resort to the Śaṁkarite thesis that the characterisation of Brahman as an object of knowledge and religious devotion is a description of His phenomenal aspect, the *Apara* Brahman or the Brahman as conditioned by *avidyā* or *māyā* and not His ultimate, transcendental or *pāramārthika* status? Vallabha's answer to this doubt is an emphatic and blatant 'no'. To him, the Śaṁkarite philosophy of *Para* and *Apara* Brahman, leaves an unbridgeable gulf and a vacuous chasm between the two orders of Reality, the transcendental (*pāramārthika*) and the pragmatic or the phenomenal (*vyāvahārika*) which is sought to be explained by the mediacy of the inexplicable principle of *māyā*. What the *śrutis* actually reveal is that the *Nirguṇa Brahman* by His own will and His infinite powers manifests Himself in name and form, in the appearance of the whole cosmos. It is the same *Saccidānanda* Brahman who is simultaneously the objective phenomena as well as the transcendental supreme who has the potentialities to subject Himself to objective manifestation.

1. Acakṣuṣkāmaśrotram.
2. Na tasya kāryam karaṇam ca vidyate.

Knowledge as we shall discuss in our chapter on 'The Theory of Knowledge', in Vallabha's philosophy, like that of other Vaiṣṇavites, is always determinate and objective in character; as such, in order that Brahman be the object either of religious devotion or of philosophic enquiry His real objectification is a pre-condition. One may be tempted to object that the schema of subject-object-relation pertaining to the categories of thought, is necessarily phenomenal in character and has no relevance in any transcendental context. But to Vallabha and his followers this is a gross misunderstanding generated by the ignorance of Brahman's inner worth, powers and magnificence. Objectification to experience whether in the devotee's heart (upāsya) or as an incarnation-when the Lord wishes to manifest Himself in public — is purely a matter of His Divine Will and Grace in which His own Desire is the only instrument. In a knowledge situation, which is essentially a cognition of an object, the object that is always present is inevitably the manifestation of Brahman presenting Himself as an object. It is simply futile to argue that such a phenomenalisation of Brahman is a violation of His transcendence for He can be both phenomenal and transcendental by virtue of His essential character that He is the repository of contradictory attributes. Whenever the *śrutis* declare that He is imperceptible[1], they only intend to communicate Brahman's imperceptibility to senses and not His absolute imperceptibility. Other *śrutis* and scriptures describing that Brahman is perceptible communicate that He is always perceptible to the devotee's third eye by virtue of His own Grace and Mercy. As Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna after manifesting His Divine Form, "Being pleased, I have shown you, O! Arjuna, through my Yoga power, this supreme form of Mine, resplendent, universal, infinite and primeval, which has not been seen before by any one else than you."[2] The term 'My Yoga power' in this context, as interpreted by Puruṣottama, means[3] that the Lord being pleased renders Himself perceptible by imparting His own special power and capability to the devotee by which along His vision is possible. This

Refutation of the objection that objectification is necessarily phenomenal.

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 144.
2. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XI, 47).
3. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* with *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 144.

point is brought out very clearly and emphatically by Vallabha in his commentary on the *sūtra*, 'Api saṁrādhane pratyakṣānumānābhyāṁ' [1] where he enjoins that Brahman when He is pleased with the devotee's worship through his adoption of the means of *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and concentration reveals Himself to him during the course of his worship. The point on which considerable emphasis is laid is the contention that the reason for 'perceptibility' or 'imperceptibility' lies in the Divine Wish and not in the individual soul; the Divine Will provides the good and the devoted soul with a special capability, the celestial eye to perceive the Lord's Form, universal or otherwise, — a thesis which is well supported by the *Kaṭhopaniṣad's* mantra, 'He is attainable by one whom He selects' and the whole of the Chapter XI of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Vallabha, therefore, propounds that though the Ultimate Reality is beyond the ordinary worldy means of cognition, such as perception and inference, He can be an object of cognition as per His own Wish. When He descends on earth as an *avatāra*, moved by His own Will, for manifesting Himself to the devotees in general (avatāradaśā) His Form is an object of cognition to all. The Vallabhites, therefore, denounce that all opponents claiming the absolute incognisibility of Brahman being ignorant of Brahman's immense and positive capabilities are damned [2] fools; the ignorance of such an opponent is itself an outcome of His Divine [3] Wish.

Perception of God caused by His Will.

(H) THE POWERS OF BRAHMAN

In the preceding pages we have dealt with the nature of Brahman as *saccidānanda*, ubiquitous, indestructible, full of divine, infinite attributes, omniscient, omnipotent and perfectly independent. The two concepts of ubiquitous-ness and independence are central to the Vallabhite theory of evolution in as much as around them evolves the explanation of the 'how' and the 'why' of creation. As we shall discuss, in detail, in our chapter on 'Creation', the problem of the 'why' of creation is explained by referring to the Supreme Will of God or Brahman who is perfectly independent and this independence consists

1. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (3, 2, 24) with *Aṇubhāṣya*.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 928.
3. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 144.

in His being the reservoir of infinite and unlimited powers-both of knowledge (*jñāna*) and activity (*kriyā*). In His pure, supreme and transcendental state of dissolution when there arises in Him a desire, out of mere sport, to manifest Himself, His mysterious and infinite power is awakened, like the opening of eyes, (*unmeṣa*) and the whole creative process sets in. It is through this mysterious and infinite power, which is termed '*māyā*' or '*yoga-māya*' [1], both in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata*, that the manifestative evolution of Brahman in His successive deployments takes place. But how Brahman who is all-pervasive (*vibhu*) is rendered limited in His *aṁśas* such as the individual souls and the Inconscient *Prakṛti*? Vallabha explains this fact and appearance of limitation by the spontaneous covering of Brahman by the sheath of *māyā*, His inscrutable, mysterious and infinite power which, as willed by Him, uncovers its veil, not as a whole but in parts, resulting in the manifestation of the jīvas and *Prakṛti* with its variegated forms. Thus the concept of *māyā* as a causative power is the nave of the wheel of creation not only to Vallabha but to almost all the interpreters and masters of Vaiṣṇavism who, as we have seen, are the inheritors of the Pāñcarātra tradition and in whom the concept of the relationship between the power (*śakti*) and the Powerful (*śaktimān*) has manifested itself in diverse, yet important, nuances.

The problem of relation between power and powerful.

The concept of the 'Power' of the Personal and the Almighty Eternal has naturally led to the problem : Is this power identical or different from Brahman? If it is identical, how any differentiation between the 'power' and the 'powerful' is ever possible? If the two are different, then dualism is to be acknowledged as the final creed of philosophy bidding good-bye to all attempts at monistic interpretation. Thus those having faith in the monism of the Absolute [2], including Vallabha, are defiant of the very approach that the two, the Power and the Powerful, can ever be different. The canvas of Vaiṣṇavism glows with the brightness of the different shades of

1. Yā jagatkāraṇabhūtā bhagavacchaktiḥ sā yogamāyā.
(*Subodhinī*, on śloka X, 2, 9 to 11).
2. To Śaṁkara, however, this is not so much a problem because he relegates the concepts of 'power' and the 'powerful' and their relation as belonging to the *vyāvahārika* order of existence caused by *avidyā*.

belief on this point in accordance with the importance which they attach to the concept of Power or *śakti* giving rise to such situations where it seems to overpower the Powerful Himself.

Vallabha's theory of the relation between Māyā and Brahman.

In his analysis and interpretation of the relation between '*Māyā*' and 'Brahman' Vallabha, being a pure Advaitin, recognising only the Being of Brahman treads through the path cautiously. To him, *māyā*, or the power of Brahman, is nothing separate from Him, but only His potentiality of being anything and everything, His capacity of manifesting Himself in any name and form (*sarvabhavanasāmarthya*). Just as the capacity of a man, to think or act in any way, is identical with him similarly *māyā*, the Brahman's power is identical and, therefore, non-different from Him. Any attempt at distinguishing *māyā*, as a power, from Brahman is, to Vallabha, a misplaced idea and a denunciation of both the *śrutis* and such *smṛtis* as the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata*.

Though the power of Brahman is unitary, for Brahman is one, yet in Vallabhite literature we have generally a twofold classification of this power : the *jñāna-śakti* (the power of knowledge) and the *kriyā-śakti* (the power of action or Force)[1]. The Conscious Power or *Jñāna-śakti* is that power of Brahman by which He, in His nature as eternal consciousness, knows and reveals all his transcendental and phenomenal verities. As to Vallabha all the modes and means of cognition (*pramāṇas*) are also included within the compass of this Conscious Force, he further classifies this *jñāna-śakti* as the[2] one capable of objective presentation and the other as the mode which is instrumental in this objective presentation. Since the Vedas are the only ultimately reliable *pramāṇas* they are the one that represent the *pramāṇabala* aspect of Brahman's *jñāna-śakti* whereas the attributes of the Lord both in His transcendental and phenomenal statuses are the real *prameyas*. The Dynamic Force or the *Kriyā-śakti* of Brahman is the power through which He deploys Himself into the subsequent stages of evolution and supports

Kriyā-śakti.

1. Jñānakriyobhayayutaḥ kṛṣṇastubhagāvan svayaṁ.
(*Tattvārthadīpanibandha* kārikā 58).
2. Jñānaśaktir dvividhā, pramāṇabalena, prameyabalena ca. Pramāṇaṁ Vedaḥ. Prameyaṁ bhagavaddharmāḥ. (*Subodhinī* on *Bhāgavata* śloka X, 2, 25).

the dynamism of his phenomenal creation. While interpreting the symbolism of the four-handed figure of the Lord, Vallabha explains that His four hands represent His four different *kriyā-śaktis* [1] : (1) the conch (śaṅkha) stands for the element of water (2) the lotus (Kamala) is a symbol of the element of 'earth' (3) the club (*gadā*) represents the element of 'air' or the Vital Force and (4) the disc (*sudarśana*) symbolises the 'fire' or Energy. Thus for Vallabha, whereas the Conscious force is an aspect of Brahman's eternal and inherent consciousness, His Dynamic Force represents His infinite, power of Becoming. As the *Śvetāśvatara-mantra* lays down, 'The *śrutis* tell of the diverse powers of this Brahman as inherent knowledge, strength and activity'.[2]

Icchāśakti included in *Jñāna-śakti.*

This classification of the powers of Brahman, however, raises a question : What about the Lord's Power of Will or *Icchāśakti* specially when some other Āgamika systems of Philosophy, e.g., the Kāśmīraka School of Śaivism, have claimed that it should be recognised as a separate power of the Absolute? Vallabha while clarifying this doubt asserts that this power of Will is included within the *jñāna-śakti* of the Lord because Will or *īkṣaṇa* is only a type [3] of knowledge; without knowledge no *īkṣaṇa* or willing is ever possible. So instead of acknowledging Will as a separate power he includes the power of Will within the gamut of *jñāna-śakti.*

Though the Supreme Power of Brahman, descriptive of His infinite potentiality of being anything whatsoever He choses to be is nomenclatured in Vallabhite literature as '*māyā*' yet because of *māyā*'s inscrutable and unimaginable working in the manifestation of the cosmos and its instrumentality in creating delusion for the individual souls it is often counted in the Scriptures among the so many powers of the Lord. In such cases the reference is only to the *vyāmohikā* or the delusive aspect of *māyā* and there is no intention to decry the comprehension of the term '*māyā*' as the supreme unitary power or potentiality of Brahman.

1. *Subodhinī* on *Bhāgavata*, śloka (X, 3, 9).
2. Parāsyaśaktir vividhaiva śrūyate svābhāvikī jñānabalakriyā ca.
   (*Śvetaśvataropaniṣad*, mantra, 6, 8)
3. Īkṣaṇaṁ jñānaṁ yasya. (*Subodhinī* on śloka (X, 3, 9).

Notwithstanding the infinite powers and attributes of Brahman prominence is attached in almost all the schools of Vaiṣṇavism to His special attributes which are eternally and essentially present in Him, viz., (1) *jñāna* (knowledge), (2) *aiśvarya* [1] (lordship), (3) *śakti* (ability, potency), (4) *bala* (strength), (5) *vīrya* (virility) and (6) *tejas* (splendour, might), Knowledge or *jñāna* stands for Brahman's omniscience; *aiśvarya* is His capacity of lordship based on His unimpeded independence; *śakti* is His mysterious power or potency of 'accomplishing the non-accomplished' (*aghaṭitaghatanāsāmarthyaṁ*); *bala* or strength is the Lord's power to sustain all things (*dhāraṇa-sāmaarthya*) without any fatigue whatsoever; *vīrya*, the fifth attribute, is defined as the capacity of remaining changeless despite the fact that He is the material-cause of the world-order. It is through this attribute that Brahman while undergoing change during the course of evolution remains unchanged. The sixth and the last *guṇa*, the *tejas*, is the Lord's splendour and might in defeating all others. These six attributes and potentialities of Brahman, originally described in the Pāñcarātra Āgamas, are accepted with some modifications in Śrī Vallabha's Theology in which he asserts in clear and certain terms that these attributes, inherently and essentially also belong to the individual souls (*jīvas*) who are only the *aṁśas* of Brahman. These six attributes (*ṣaḍguṇas*), according to Vallabha, are *aiśvarya*, *vīrya*, *yaśa*, *śrī*, *jñāna* and *vairāgya*. As per the interpretation of *Āvaraṇa* [2] they stand respectively for the all-pervasiveness (*vyāpakatva*), immutability (*avyayatva*), omnipotence (*sarvaśakti*), independence (*svatantra*), omniscience (*sarvajña*) and the transcendence (of the *prākṛtika-guṇas* of Brahman). Due to God's Wish, during the course of the manifestation and separation of the jīvas from Brahman these six attributes are veiled and concealed with the result that instead of manifesting their essential and inherent qualities the individual souls, being caught in the snare of phenomenal debasement, manifest and project just the opposite. The concealment of *aiśvarya* causes [3] the sense of dependence and helpless-ness, the veiling of *vīrya* renders him capable of all kinds of

The six attributes or *bhagas* of Brahman.

The effect of the concealment of the six attributes of the jīva.

1. Schrader; *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 38.
2. Mishra, K.N. : Commentary on *Tattvārthadīpanibandha* (Hindi), p. 208.
3. *Aṇubhāṣya*, on sūtra (3, 2, 5), p.883.

sorrows and through the non-manifestation of *yaśa* he is always in want and in a state of destitution and deprivation. Due to the concealment of *Śrī*, he is subjected to the sorrows and sufferings of birth, death etc.; the concealment and non-manifestation of *jñāna* endows him with the sense of ego, identification with body etc, and all sorts of false knowledge. The concealment of *vairāgya* — which in Brahman means non-attachment — creates in the individual souls the feeling of attachment towards the various worldly objects. To Vallabha the bondage and the false knowledge of the individual souls is, therefore, a direct consequence of the veiling and concealment of the eternal attributes of *jñāna* and *vairāgya*.

It may, however, be noted that this doctrine of the six special attributes of Brahman (*bhogas*) which is a legacy of the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and accepted verbatim by Rāmānuja [1] has been introduced by Vallabha in his philosophical and theological system with certain modifications possibly on the basis of the enumeration of these *ṣaḍguṇas* in *Viṣṇupurāṇa* [2].

1. See Rāmānuja's commentary on *Bhagavadgītā* with *Tātparyacandrikā* of Venkaṭanātha, p. 4 to 5.
2. *Viśṇupurāṇa*, śloka (6, 5, 76).

CHAPTER IV

THE STATUSES OF BRAHMAN

Our discussion in the preceding chapter has revealed that the character of Being or the Ultimate Reality, the Brahman or Kṛṣṇa — as the Vallabhites would aver — is a unitary determinate homogeneity of celestial attributes that are co-extensive with Eternity and Infinity of Brahman who is Individual, Concrete, Personal and beyond the range of the *guṇas* of Prakṛti (*nirguṇa*) and that the real and the original nature of Brahman is Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss. During the course of our deliberations we have also observed that what constitutes the real essence of Brahman-hood, notwithstanding His attributes of Existence and Consciousness, is Pure Delight, the innermost core of His Being, and that the successive manifestations or self-projections of the Absolute into the cosmic world-order are a progressive concealment of His Bliss. With the expression of the Wish to be many there is an instantaneous concealment of a portion of the Absolute's Infinite Delight, so to say, and there is the manifestation of His particular aspect or status which is the ultimate cause and the ground of all successive causes and effects of the cosmos of Name and Form; Vallabha terms this state, on the authority of the Upaniṣads, as the Akṣara-Brahman. With the furtherance of the unfolding of the other forms, both transcendental and phenomenal, there is a gradual decrease in the manifestation of Bliss to the extent that in the appearance of *Prakṛti* or the Lower Nature it is almost absent. In Vallabha's philosophy, Brahman being the only *prameya*, all that exists is Brahman in a particular form of manifestation; even the phenomenal cosmos with all its relations [1] expressed in the seven types of cases (*vibhaktis*) — the nominative, the accusative, the instrumental, the dative, the ablative, the genitive

Concealment of Bliss – the raison d'etre of Order.

1. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (X, 85, 4) and *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, kārikā, 48.

and the locative — are nothing but Brahman. This, however, does not imply the perfect equation of the *Kārya-Brahman* or His cosmic manifestation with His original and primitive status of Blissful Effulgence for the simple reason that in the finitude, relativity and dependence of cosmic existence — which is an effect — there is almost a total concealment and non-manifestation of Brahman's Blissful Infinity; wherever it seems to appear, it is almost negligible.

The four statuses of Brahman.

In Śrī Vallabha's philosophy the original and the real nature of Brahman is contemplated in four orders or forms depending on the quantum of the manifestation or concealment of His Blissful aspect. This scheme is purely for facilitating the comprehension of the depths, to the innermost core, of the Infinite and Effulgent Absolute by our human consciousness and mentality which by its very nature is analytic, partial, discrete and limited. We would be committing a blunder if we, in our comprehension, relate these forms of Brahman with our ideas of extension and intellectual categories of logic for they are only His aspects and statuses and not forms in the intellectual sense. Vallabha and his followers contemplate of the three aspects or statuses of the original *svarūpa* of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, namely the Puruṣottama, the Akṣara and the Antaryāmin. As there is a difference in the spiritual manifestation of the Akṣara to the jñānī and the bhakta, the Akṣara is further classified into two and thus we have in Vallabhite philosophy a four-fold classification of the original and the real nature of Brahman; by the original nature or *mūlarūpa* the Vallabhites comprehend all His aspects and statuses to the exclusion only of *prapañca-rūpa* or His manifestation as the Cosmos.

(A) THE PURUṢOTTAMA

Nature of Puruṣottama.

On the authority of the *Bhagavadgītā*, the supreme aspect of the Immutable, Eternal, Indefinable and Infinite Brahman is termed 'Puruṣottama' by Vallabha and his followers who take great pains to establish on the basis of the scriptural texts and their etymological interpretation the identity of Puruṣottama and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottama being a status of Brahman has as much the character of Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss as any of Its other aspects, for example, Akṣara. What distinguishes Him from the others is the unmitigated, untramelled and unlimited manifestation of the Infinite

Delight in all His infinitely numerous glories. It is that particular status of Brahman whose manifestation to the devotee (*bhakta*) opens to him the gateway to the highest and the supreme spiritual experience of an unblemished pure existence, pure-consciousness and pure-delight and entitles him to comrade-ship in the eternal, spiritual and transcendental sport of the Lord. This particular spiritual communion between the Puruṣottama — aspect of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa and His fortunate devotees is a subject of an enchanting discussion in Vallabhite literature to which we shall, however, revert in our chapter, 'The Theory and Practice of Bhakti'.

A state of Infinite Bliss.

What needs to be impressed here is the Vallabhite contention that Puruṣottama is that aspect of Brahman wherein there is the fullest manifestation of Divine Delight along with the purest and all-pervading consciousness. This is the state referred to in the *Taittirīya* — statement that 'He is Bliss' or in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* — the Nārada - Sanatkumāra dialogue — as the Bhūmā, an all-pervasive and supporting state of Eternal Delight. As the manifestation of *ānanda* (bliss) in the state of Akṣara-Brahman is only limited, the Puruṣottama is considered to be even superior to It. As the *Gītā* unequivocally stresses, "Different from these is the Supreme Being known as Puruṣottama who having entered the three worlds sustains them"[1] and "since I am beyond the perishable and even excel the imperishable, therefore, I am well known in this world and the Vedas as the Supreme Being (Puruṣottama)."[2]

It is not, therefore, astonishing that Vallabha has repeatedly emphasised that people with superior spiritual and moral qualifications, i.e., imbued with an excellence of devotional mentality towards Godhead, should always worship the Puruṣottama and his *vibhūtis* for it is the unflinching devotion to Him alone that is instrumental in the attainment of the Highest Fruit — the *sarvātmabhāva* (the attitude of the devotees in which they see every[3] thing in the Lord), the *Brahmabhāva* and entry into Kṛṣṇa's Eternal Sport. Though a detailed discussion on these points will be undertaken in our chapter, 'The Theory and Practice of Bhakti', yet it may be worthwhile to mention that in the Vallabhite system the process of the attainment of knowledge

1. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XV, 17)
2. *Ibid*, śloka (XV, 18).
3. Bhatt, G.H. : *Vallabhācārya and His Doctrines*, p. 17.

of Puruṣottama is not identical with that of the attainment of Brahman in Śāṁkara Vedānta. In the Vedānta of Śaṁkara, the spiritual realization of Brahman is an inner process of spiritual development attaining the dizzy heights of the removal of all nescience and the simultaneous manifestation of Self but in the Vallabhite system the knowledge of Puruṣottama is something not acquired by the soul but delivered to it by the Lord Himself. Even in the supreme manifestation of Kṛṣṇa-Consciousness there [1] sustains a difference — the difference between the Lord and the devotee — for without this difference no manifestation of delight of the eternal sport, the *bhajanānanda*, is ever conceivable. The Puruṣottama is thus the Highest and the Supreme Status of the Ultimate Reality.

Difference in the Advaitic and the Vallabhite attainment of Puruṣottama's knowledge.

(B) THE AKṢARA-BRAHMAN

When in Puruṣottama there arises a desire to be many, His Infinitely Blissful status is concealed by His celestial and divine attribute of *sattva* [2] consequent upon which there is a projection of a particular status in which there is only a limited [3], (*gaṇita*) though immensely great in measure, manifestation of Divine Delight. This special aspect of Brahman which is absolutely immutable is termed in Vallabhite Philosophy as the 'Akṣara-Brahman'. In Vallabha's theologico-philosophical explanation the Akṣara-Brahman is recognised as the ultimate cause and the ground of all [4] subsequent transcendent and phenomenal evolutions; it is from the Akṣara that the emanations of the individual-souls (*puruṣa*) and the Nature (*prakṛti*) take place and for this reason the Akṣara-Brahman has been defined [5] as that special poise of Paramātman after which He becomes both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. This contention is collaborated by the *Bhāgavata* [6] also

The Nature of Akṣara Brahman.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 3, 35) with *Prakāśa*, p. 1094.
2. Tasminrūpe bhagavadharmātmakaḥ, sattvaena ānandāṁśāstirohita iva bhavati. Tadātadrūpaṁ akṣara śabda vācyaṁ bhavati. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 55).
3. Īṣadānandatirobhāvena brahmākṣaramucyate. Pragaṭānandaḥ puruṣa iti. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 337)
4. Jagadbījaṁ tu bhagavān eva... Akṣarasya kāraṇatva tu yonitvāt. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra, 1,4,3).
5. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 56.
6. *Bhāgavata*, ślokas (XI, 24, 3 & 4).

wherein it is remarked that the One Great Conscious, Indeterminate Truth beyond the reach of speech and mind, through His Māyā, became the two; from His Knowledge-Force (jñāna-śakti) arose the *Puruṣa* (individual-souls) and from His Active-Force was actualised the *Prakṛti*. It is to this state that the *nirguṇa-śrutis* and the *Bhagvadgītā* always point to when they refer to Brahman as Akṣara (the immutable), avyakta (indescribable), kūṭastha (immobile), asat (non-being), etc.

Now the question is : What is the nature of this state? The Upaniṣads describe this Immutable Brahman as "neither gross nor minute, neither short nor long, neither red-colour nor oiliness, neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor ether, unattached, neither savour nor odour, without eyes or ears, without vocal organ or mind, nor-luminous, without the vital force or mouth, without interior or exterior," [1] as "soundless, touchless, colourless, undiminishing, and also tasteless, eternal, odourless, without beginning and without end, distinct from *mahat* and ever constant," [2] as the one in which "there is no diversity whatsoever," [3] as 'the one which cannot be perceived and grasped, which is without source, features, eyes and ears; which has neither hands nor feet; which is eternal, multiformed all-pervasive, extremely subtle and undiminishing and which is the source of all." [4] It is a state beyond all predications and about It, 'Not-this' [5] is the only apt description.

Śaṁkarite interpretation.

Śaṁkara in his commentaries on these Upaniṣadic texts, seeks to justify that they refer to the Highest and Supreme state of Ultimate Reality or Brahman which is indeterminate, unconditional, homogeneous, non-attributive and beyond all predications and determinations; it is a unitary state of Pure Existence and Resplendent Consciousness, a consciousness transcending the schema of subject-object-relation. This Akṣara or the Immutable is identical with the Puruṣottama; the same Akṣara is termed 'Puruṣottama' to indicate that He is the Supreme Divinity [6]. As he explicitly lays down in his commentary on the ***Bṛhadāraṇyaka***, "By

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 8, 8).
2. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (I, 3, 15).
3. *Ibid*, mantra (II, 1, 11).
4. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (1, 1, 6).
5. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (II, 3, 6).
6. Paramiti ca niratiśaye brahmaṇi akṣara upapannataraṁ viśeṣanaṁ. (Śaṁkara's *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* on śloka 8, 3; See also *Madhusūdanī* on the same).

the elimination of all differences due to limitating adjuncts the name, or form, or action, or homogeneity, or species or qualities. Words denote things through one or the other of these. But Brahman has none of those distinguishing marks. Hence it cannot be described as 'It is such and such'..... Brahman is described by means of name, form and action superimposed on It in such terms as 'Knowledge', 'Bliss', 'Pure-intelligence', 'Brahman' and 'Atman'. When, however, we wish to describe Its true nature, free from all differences due to limitating adjuncts, then it is an utter impossibility. Then there is only one way left, viz., to describe it as 'Not-this', 'Not-this' by eliminating all possible specifications of It that have been known."[1]

Vallabhite exposition.

This characterisation of Akṣara or the Imperishable as the unconditioned, undifferentiated, non-relative Absolute Ultimate Reality is, to Vallabha, at variance with both the dictates of the *śrutis* and the *Bhagavadgītā* in as much as none of these intend to ascribe to Akṣara the supreme and the ultimate status. No doubt it is inner and different from the *Kṣara* or the universal soul manifesting itself as the mutable objects of phenomena, is 'the immutable in the mutable, the immobile in the mobile, the imperishable in things perishable'[2] and is the subject of elucidation in the above quoted texts from the Upaniṣads yet it would be a travesty to read the advaitic meaning through the lines of these *śrutis*. According to Vallabha, as we have already mentioned earlier, the negation of attributes, of all sorts, in the *nirguṇa-śrutis* is confined only to phenomenal attributes and is no acknowledgement of the indeterminate character of this state. This state, though trans-relational, is a state of positive *pure-sattva* in which the phenomenal manifestations at the time of dissolution find their ultimate rest and shake off their apparent variety; it is the final cause of the whole cosmos; yet this is not the ultimate status of Brahman as the quantum of the manifestation of Delight in this state is after[3] all limited. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is even more unambiguous in its contention that there is another aspect of Brahman which is superior[4] to the Akṣara. As the *Gītā*

The State of Puruṣottama superior to Akṣara.

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (II, 3, 6).
2. Śrī Aurobindo : *Essays on the Gita*, p. 423.
3. Prākṛtāḥ sakalā devāḥ gaṇitānandakaṁ vṛhat,
   Pūrṇānando haristasmāt kṛṣṇa eva gatirmama. (*Śrīkṛṣṇāśraya*, śloka 8).
4. Akṣarādapi cottamaḥ (*Gītā*, śloka, XV, 18).

proclaims, "Different from these is the Supreme Self, the Immutable Lord, who having entered the three worlds sustains. Since I am beyond the perishable (*kṣara*) and even excel the imperishable (*akṣara*) therefore, I am well known in this world, as in the Vedas, as the Supreme Being (*Puruṣottama*)."[1] Though the Śaṁkarites in their commentaries of these two *ślokas* of the *Gītā* deviating from the general interpretation of the term '*akṣara*' as the unconditioned Ultimate Reality of Brahman, have endeavoured to water-down the manifest distinction between the two states by interpreting the '*kṣara*' and the '*akṣara*' as the two limitating adjuncts[2] (*upādhis*) of Puruṣottama — the Eternal, Pure, Conscious and Free Being — yet they have miserably failed in their mission; the verdict of the *Gītā* affirms a distinction between the two states, viz., the Akṣara and the Puruṣottama.

The status of Akṣara in Vallabhite philosophy is a state of positive and immutable homogeneity resplendent with Consciousness and with a limited manifestation of Bliss. It is a state of *pure-sattva*; as knowledge depends[3] on *sattva*, the Akṣara is the aspect of Brahman predominant with Pure Knowledge and Consciousness; it is a state variously known in Vallabhite literature, as *vyāpivaikuṇṭha*, the foot[4] of the Lord etc. and is the ultimate destination of the path of knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*). The seekers after Truth who follow the *jñāna-mārga* ultimately merge in this state and attain liberation. This Akṣara is, to Vallabhites, a state of *Saguṇa-Brahman* and not *nirguṇa*, as contended by the Advaitins, for the simple reason that it is always permeated by the attribute of pure-sattva.

The manifestation of this state of Brahman to the followers of *jñāna-mārga* is, however, not identical and similar in all cases. To those seekers who follow the pure path of Yoga and Knowledge the realisation of this state is one of Pure Immutable[5] Consciousness alone, though associated with limited delight, in which there is no sharing of the Divine Sport and no prospect of entering into the ultimate status of

1. *Bhagavadgītā*, ślokas (XV, 17 & 18).
2. Kṣarākṣaropādhidvaya doṣena aspṛṣṭo nitya śuddhabuddhamuktasvabhāvaḥ uttamaḥ utkṛṣṭatamaḥ puruṣastvanyo.....
   (*Bhagavadgītāśāṁkarabhāṣya* on śloka, XV, 17)
3. *Subodhinī* on *Bhāgavata* śloka (X, 2, 34) and *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 55.
4. Akṣarasya caraṇādyātmakatvena. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 209)
5. Avyaktaṁ saccidrūpaṁ akṣaramevāstu... Avyakto akṣaramucyate.
   (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 473).

Puruṣottama. To those, however, who after realising this state are moved by a continuous, unfettered emotion of devotion and love (*bhakti*) towards the Lord — which is an act of mercy of the Supreme Lord Himself — find themselves on the threshold of the Final and the most Supreme Status of Brahman, the Puruṣottama, Vallabha, therefore, distinguishes between the two aspects of Akṣara Brahman on the basis of realisation [1] : (1) the Akṣara of the pure jñānis or the followers of the path of Yoga and pure knowledge without any associating emotion of devotion and (2) the Akṣara of the Jñānis who subsequently take to the path of devotion and acquire an inherent capacity for finding an entry into the Puruṣottama.

The two aspects of Akṣara.

Though Akṣara is the ultimate state of emancipation in which the soul of the seeker after truth is laid to ultimate rest in its unitary undifferentiated immortality yet to the Vallabhites it is not opposed to the state of Puruṣottama. When the *jñāni* after realising this state is moved with *bhakti* he acquires an inherent qualification for entering into the floodgates of Puruṣottama's unlimited Delight. The knowledge of Akṣara leads to the destruction of *avidyā* (nescience); with the destruction of *avidyā* there is a partial manifestation of Bliss which is usually contemplated as the realisation of the Self's true nature. This realisation of the Self's nature is ultimately instrumental in producing *brahmabhāva* which is recognised in Vallabhite philosophy as a status of inseparability from Brahman. Thus the realisation of the Akṣara-Brahman to a *jñāni*-cum-devotee is only the attainment of a state anterior to the final state of the All Blissful Puruṣottama. It is why Vallabha and his followers have conceived of it as the abode of Puruṣottama, the *Vyāpi-vaikuṇṭha* or the *Parama-vyoma*. To the devotee [3] there is first the manifestation of this Akṣara in his heart-ether (*hṛdayākāśa*) and then there is the illumination of the Puruṣottama. As the Akṣara state is the first manifestation or deployment of the Puruṣottama-aspect of Brahman the Vallabhites generally regard it as the *vibhūti* of Brahman from which all posterior *vibhūtis* subsequently follow. When the Ṛṣi of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* declares that 'the knower of Brahman attains

1. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 55.
2. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1085.
3. Guhāyāṁ hṛdayākāśe yadāvirbhūtaṁ paramaṁ vyomākṣarātmakaṁ vyāpivaikuṇṭhaṁ, tasyapuruṣottamagṛharūpatvāt.

(*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 174)

Akṣar as *Vibhūti*.

the Supreme' [1] he intends by 'the knower of Brahman (*brahmavit*) the 'knower of Akṣara-Brahman, and thus supports the Vallabhite thesis of the difference between the two statuses of Brahman — the Akṣara and the Puruṣottama — and also commends the doctrine that the Akṣara is the immediate lower [2] rung in the ladder having Puruṣottama at its apex. This should, however, not lure us into the belief that the realization of Akṣara is a necessary condition precedent to the spiritual attainment of the Puruṣottama. As we shall elaborate later on, at the proper place, the spiritual communion with Puruṣottama is also possible for the devotee of the Puṣṭimārga who by the Lord's Divine Grace is endowed with the requisite intensity [3] of devotion and is introduced by His Mercy into His Supreme Celestial Abode to confront His status as Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa and to share and enjoy the plays of His Divine Sport. But so far as those who have started their spiritual journey on the carriage of knowledge are concerned they have generally no other option but to seek the realization of and identification with the Akṣara-Brahman; then God willing, they may through the intensity of their devotion and His Divine Grace enter into the realization of His supreme aspect — the status of Puruṣottama. In reality, there is no basic difference between [4] the Akṣara and the Puruṣottama; the two are basically the two statuses of the single Ultimate Reality — the Brahman.

(C) THE ANTĀRYĀMIN

Antaryāmin, the fourth status of Brahman, is a statement of the principle of governance and lordship over the universe, and all that it contains, as a necessary aspect of Divine Perfection. All that exists in the cosmos, the Nature and the souls with all their innumerable activities are under the control of the inscrutable divine power of Godhead or Brahman; on account of this special attribute which belongs to Him alone, His Particular aspect as the Controller is known as the Antaryāmin or the Inner Ruler. The Antaryāmī section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* is a detailed philosophical account of

The conception of *Antaryāmin* in Upaniṣads.

1. Brahmavidāpnoti paraṁ. (*Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra 2, 1)
2. Pūrvakakṣāviśrāntamevākṣarajñānaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1085)
3. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 3, 33). p. 1085.
4. Tathā cāvasthābhedamādāya ayaṁ bhedavyapadeśo, na tu vastu bhedāt. (*Prakāśa* on sūtra 2,2,31, p. 337).

Brahman's inner control and direction of His outer cosmic manifestations in such forms as the earth, the water, the fire, the sky, the air, the heaven, the quarters, the moon and stars, the ether, the light, all the living-beings, the nose, the organ of speech, the eye, the ear, the mind (*manas*), the intellect, and the organ of generation. The mantras of [1] this section emphatically assert that the Immortal Inner Ruler whose bodies are these phenomenal forms controls them from within and is beyond their (the earth etc.) ken. This phase of Brahman as the ruler of both the cosmic elemental bodies (*adhibhūtaṁ*) and the human body is Internal and Immortal. "He is never seen but is the witness; He is never heard, but is the Hearer; He is never thought but is the Thinker; He is never known but is the Knower. There is no other witness but He, no other Hearer but He, no other thinker but He, no other knower but He. He is the Self, the Immortal Inner Ruler." [2]

This aspect of Brahman as the Inner Ruler — a vociferous description of Godhead's Eternal Perfection — is none else but a form of Puruṣottama Himself. Because Brahman or Puruṣottama by entering into the various cosmic and bodily (of the creatures) forms rules them from within, He as the Inner Ruler is also called the Puruṣa [3]. This Puruṣa or the Antaryāmin which is One and not many is also, according to Vallabhite philosophy, that aspect or status of Brahman which undergoes the descent [4] in the form of the various *Lilāvatāras* 'for the protection of the righteous and the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of *dharma*'. [5]

The implications of the conception of Antaryāmin according to Vallabha.

Vallabha, in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*, '*Bhedavyapa deśāccānyaḥ*' dwells [6] upon the four particular implications and the significances of the concept of the Antaryāmin as available in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Firstly, the mantras by declaring the antaryāmin as inner to the indwelling egoistic spirits of the cosmic bodies, e.g., the sun-god are assertive of the judgement that while He dwells inside them He is unaffected and unrelated to their specific attributes (*dharmas*). When the mantras aver that the Inner

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantras (III, 7, 1 to 23).
2. Ibid, mantra (III, 7, 23).
3. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 63.
4. Ataḥ puruṣottamasyarūpāntaraṁ antaryāmisaṁjñakaṁ ekaṁ. Sarve tasya avatārāḥ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 67).
5. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (6, 8).
6. *Brahma sūtra* (1, 1, 20) with *Aṇubhāṣya*.

Ruler is not known to the earth, water, etc. they simply intend to communicate this meaning. Secondly, the mantras imply that just for the purpose of warding off the possibility of the instantaneous deliverance of the whole world the Antaryāmin does not pervade them (the cosmic manifestations) with His own intrinsic, pristine and special attributes such as omniscience, transcendence of sin etc. lest the pervasion of the souls destroy their ignorance and render them qualified for emancipation. Thirdly, the manifestation of Brahman in the form of cosmos--known as the effects — is only for the purpose of the manifestation of His Eternal Sport; had there been no Antaryāmin to lord over the cosmic effects the uninterrupted and undisturbed movement of the Divine Sport would have been impossible. The fourth inner significance of the philosophy of the Antaryāmin is the implied meaning that the Antaryāmin by being the innermost is assertive of the truth that It differentiates Itself from all that exists in the cosmos. Its own divine attributes and Its character as the inner controller displays the truth of the manifested difference on the surface of the ocean of identity.

Though the idea of the Antaryāmin or the Inner Ruler has the universal assent of almost all the philosophical systems of Vedānta yet the Śaṁkarite interpretation of this concept is antagonistic, in its ultimate analysis, to the views upheld by Vallabha and the other Vaiṣṇavites. Śaṁkara, in both his commentary [1] on the *Brahmasūtra* and on the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, clearly indicates that the Antaryāmin, whom he equates with Īśvara, is a product of the limitation of the Ultimate Reality, the Brahman, by the *kāraṇopādhi* or māyā, the limitative adjunct, and its difference from the individual soul (*jīva*) is rendered possible only by the difference in their limitative adjuncts. The difference between Brahman, the Antaryāmin and the jīva is, therefore, not from the ultimate standpoint (*pāramārthika*) but only from the *vyāvahārika* point of view caused by the operation of Nescience. As Śaṁkara explicates in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, "Therefore the unconditioned Self being beyond speech and mind, undifferentiated and one, is designated 'Not-this', 'Not-this'; when it has the limitating adjuncts of the body and organs, which are charac-

1. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya* on sūtra (1, 2, 20), p. 81.

terised by ignorance, desire and work, It is called the transmigratory individual-self; and when the Self has the limitating adjunct of the power of eternal and unlimited knowledge (i.e. *māyā*), It is called the Internal Ruler and Īśvara. The same Self, as by nature transcendent, absolute and pure is called the Immutable and Supreme Self." [1]

Vallabhite refutation.

Such an interpretation and explanation of the being and the status of the Antaryāmin, which from the ultimate standpoint is only unreal, is for the Vallabhites a preposterous derogation of Brahman's supreme and infinite glory and a misrepresentation of the *śrutis*. From the length at which this concept is evolved in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* it is beyond any shadow of doubt that the *śruti* intends to emphasize its real status as an aspect of the Supreme Nirguṇa-Brahman or Puruṣottama with His Infinite Divine Perfections.

Vallabhite doctrine of individual antaryāmin.

There is, however, in Vallabha's theology another doctrine of Antaryāmin which is quite different from the philosophy of the One Internal Ruler as explicated above. Taking his cue probably from the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*'s mantra which runs, "Two birds that are ever associated and have similar names, cling to the same tree, of these, the one eats the fruit of divergent tastes and the other looks on without eating," [2] and other texts, Vallabha evolves the doctrine of the manifestation of another [3] set of conscient existents from the Akṣara aspect of Brahman simultaneous with the manifestation of the individual-souls on the analogy of the sparks flying off the blazing fire. The innumerable existents of this set which are called *antaryāmins* [4] by Vallabha are, though conscient in nature, different from the jīvas in as much as they partake of the Immutable Brahman's Blissful character; these *antaryāmins* as such are blessed with a limited manifestation of Brahman's [5] essence, the Delight, in contrast to the jīvas whose intrinsic character of bliss is always veiled and disguised. These *antaryāmins* that are the infinite manifestations of Brahman's Bliss, though originating from the Akṣara Brahman, are the *aṁśas* of the main [6] (*mukhya*)

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 8, 12).
2. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 1, 1).
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (I, 4, 7) and *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 6).
4. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, ślokas 39 and 66.
5. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, Chapter II, śloka 88 with *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
6. Kavirāja, Gopīnātha. : *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti Aur Sādhanā*, Vol. II, p. 243. (Hindi)

Antaryāmin and at the dawn of creation enter into different bodies along with the respective jīvas. The Vallabhites argue that along with each jīva there enters into his body one *antaryāmin*, as a representative of the main Antaryāmin (Internal Ruler) to control, govern and witness the good and the bad deeds of the individual soul. The governance and control of the main Antaryāmin — as aspect of the Supreme Godhead — over the unlimited number of the jīvas is thus actuated through the medium of the plurality of these derived *antaryāmins*.

It is thus apparent that it is only the Main Antaryāmin which is included within the original and the pristine statuses of Brahman which, according to Vallabha, are the Puruṣottama, the Akṣara of the jñāṇis, the Akṣara of the Bhaktas and the Antaryāmin. A doubt may, however, creep in our minds : How at all, all these four statuses can simultaneously be possible in Brahman? The reason for this doubt and discrepancy lies not in Vallabhite philosophy but in our faulty egoistic, partial and non-integral mentality and apprehension of Brahman's real nature and His Infinite Powers and Perfection. We, in our ignorance, endeavour to apprehend the Supreme Godhead by the intellectual categories and canons of logic and are devoid of the integral vision which alone can open to our sights the infinite profundity of His Majesty and Power to be everything and anything at all times. We in our philosophic pride very often assert how can Brahman be both 'A' and 'not-A' at the same time. But, as it has been argued at length, He transcends the two laws of logic, viz., the Law of Contradiction and the Law of the Excluded Middle. As Śrī Aurobindo pointedly observes, "Brahman dwells in all, indivisible, yet as if divided and distributed. If we look again with an observing perception not dominated by intellectual concepts, but informed by intuition and culminating in knowledge by identity, we shall see that the consciousness of this infinite Energy is other than the mental consciousness, that it is indivisible and gives, not an equal part of itself, but its whole self at one and the same time to the solar system and to the ant-hill. To Brahman there are no whole and parts, but each thing is all and benefits by the whole Brahman." [1] This intrinsic fault

Possibility of the simultaneous being of the four statuses.

1. Śrī Aurobindo : *The Life Divine*, p. 69.

in man's intellectual mentality and moral depravity rendering him incapable of comprehending the Ultimate Truth has its apt suggestion in the Christian doctrine of the Fall of Man. Christians like Colvin frankly admit that 'men otherwise the most ingenious are blinder than moles..... In divine things it, the human mind, is altogether stupid and blind.' [1] This shortcoming can be overcome only by partaking in the intuitive and integral vision of Divinity by which alone, as the Upaniṣad suggests, 'the knot of the heart gets untied, and doubts are resolved'.[2]

1. Quoted from : Collins, James. : *God in Modern Philosophy*, p. 17.
2. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra, (II, 2, 8).

CHAPTER V

THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Importance of epistemological study.

It is a point universally accepted in Indian philosophy that the apprehension of an existent, a fact or circumstance is always dependent on 'knowledge' or 'consciousness'; as such, every system of philosophy in India had to evolve an epistemological theory of its own to justify its findings and truths in the realm of Being. The significance of this theory, however, acquires an added importance is such systems of Vedānta that recognise 'Consciousness' as one of the trio constituting the intrinsic essence of the Ultimate Reality, the *Saccidānanda*. Naturally in Śrī Vallabha's philosophy, which is also an offshoot of the Upaniṣadic Vedānta, an attempt has been made to understand the nature of knowledge or consciousness — both in its transcendental and empirical aspects — the character of its validity, the different means leading to the illumination of right knowledge and also the limits of the empirical knowledge in apprehending the intrinsic nature and attributes of transcendental verities. Therefore, for a proper comprehension of the various aspects of Vallabhite philosophy a discussion on their epistemological theories may be prudent and wise.

(A) FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Consciousness as the essence of Brahman.

As we have discussed at length in the preceding chapters, Consciousness or Knowledge, to Vallabha, is the very essence of Brahman; it is the prius and the foundation of all transcendental and phenomenal forms of knowledge and cognitive activity. Prior to the expression of Nirguṇa-Brahman's Will to be many, His Pure Consciousness rests almost in a state of stillness but as soon as this Will to create occurs in Him the Consciousness is also manifested in varied forms. According to Puruṣottama [1], though the Consciousness or Knowledge

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 1

acquires innumerable forms during the course of its successive transformations yet they can be conveniently classified under ten broad heads out of which the first four are eternal and the next six are non- eternal. We now propose to discuss them a little at length.

Consciousness eternal and non-eternal

(a) *The Eternal Forms*

1. The first of these eternal forms of knowledge (jñāna) is the Pure Consciousness of the ultimate and absolute status of Brahman which is the ground and the foundation (*āśraya*) of all cosmic phenomena. This aspect of consciousness is immutable and primary (mukhya), is the inner Self of all that exists and is the very essence of Brahman Himself who in His *nirguṇa* aspect is the object of the highest form of devotion.

Knowledge as Pure Consciousness.

The real nature of the essence of the individual soul (*jīva*) which, in Vallabhite philosophy, being an *aṁśa* (emanation) of Brahman is Conscious Existence, also belongs to this absolute, eternal aspect of Brahman; as the jīva belongs to the same genre, so to say, as Brahman the ultimate aspect of Consciousness in both is the same. This aspect of jīva's consciousness is not an object of ordinary empirical human experience; for its realization a different vision or the third eye is required which may be obtained either through the practice of Yoga (*yogadṛṣṭi*) or devotion to God (*bhagavaddṛṣṭi*) or a divine vision endowed by God's Providence (*divyadṛṣṭi*). Pure Consciousness is thus the inseparable nature of the jīva; yet subsequent to its emanation from Brahman it gets related to *avidyā* or Nescience and loses its pristine glory and self-evident illumination. Subsequently when the jīva's ignorance is removed through *vidyā* (knowledge), it is restored to its original primeval status of Consciousness. Thus to Vallabha and his followers the ultimate status of the soul's consciousness is always eternal and identical with Brahman's nature as *cit*; its appearance as empirical- consciousness during the course of its transmigratory journey is only a form of its aspect as eternal, immutable, self-evident and self-illuminating consciousness.

2. When in Brahman, who is absolutely [1] free and independent, there arises a desire to be many the equilibrium of His original, transcendental state

Knowledge as attribute of Brahman.

1. *Ibid*, p. 1

is ruffled with the result that His Consciousness which till now was unmanifested as attribute gets revealed as an attribute of Brahman and subsists in Him eternally. In this second form of knowledge we have the manifestation of the original pure consciousness, the *cit*, as a quality of Brahman just as the 'sunshine' is to the 'sun'. The same is the case with the individual-soul also. The manifestation of knowledge as an attribute of the jīva is related to this second class of eternal forms; this manifestation of consciousness as an attribute in the individual-soul is an endowment purely as a matter [1] of God's providence and His Will.

3. After the manifestation of Consciousness as 'attribute' Brahman further desolves Himself in the form of Veda (*Vedaśarīra*) for the purpose of creation. As explained in the *Bhāgavata*, Brahman [2] first enters into the *mulādhāracakra* as *parā-speech* and then deploys and manifests the other subtle forms of speech, viz., *paśyanti* and *madhyamā* through the *maṇipūraka* and *viśuddha cakras* and ultimately takes the form of the *vaikharī* speech to be verbally ejaculated as vowels and consonants. Thus the whole manifestation of Brahman's attributive and eternal knowledge, right up from the *parā* to *vaikharī* is acknowledged by tradition as Veda; this manifestation of Brahman's Knowledge or Consciousness as Veda, which is eternal, is, according to Puruṣottama, the third form of Lord's eternal knowledge.

Knowledge as 'word'.

4. The above infinite and cosmic body of speech subsequently manifests itself in individual and distorted (*vikṛta*) forms, i.e., the words — in order to be expressive of their objects — in the beginning of creation. Thus there always subsists an inviolable relation between 'knowledge' and 'word'; in cases of the dumb, however, the function of the words or language is performed by 'gestures'. The manifestation of knowledge as 'word' is thus the fourth variety of eternal knowledge, since it is ultimately dependent on the Lord. This particular form of knowledge — known as Śabda-Brahman in Scriptures — for the unfolding and creation of phenomenal world evolves itself into the differentiated schema of the subject and the object. This knowledge which is eternal is always related to the 'word' which too is eternal. We shall, however, discuss

1. Tadbhagavati nityaṁ jiveṣu pārṣadādiṣu tu taddattaṁ samāyāti. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 1).

2. *Śrī Bhāgavata*, śloka (XI, 12, 17).

more about this form of knowledge and its eternal relationship with 'meaning' while undertaking the linguistic analysis of 'testimony' and 'speech' in another section of this chapter.

(b) *Non-Eternal Forms*

Knowledge as related to 'word' and 'object'.

5. The fifth form of knowledge is always concomitant with the invariable relationship between 'word' and 'knowledge' on the one hand and between 'word' and its 'object' on the other. At this stage of knowledge there is no possibility of its being conceived as a cognition unrelated either to 'word', or 'language', or to an 'object'; even there where no expressed 'word' is used different physical gestures are adopted to express the meaning and intention. Thus at this stage of knowledge linguistic symbols or 'words' are invariably and necessarily related to it. As the spoken words and their objects, at this particular stage of knowledge, are destructible and transitory, this variety of knowledge, as a form of manifestation, is regarded as non-eternal.

Five types of non-eternal knowledge.

The Vallabhites further classify this non-eternal variety of knowledge into five heads in accordance with the means and instruments utilized for its manifestation. The means and instruments adopted are senses and the four modes of *antaḥkaraṇa* (the internal organ) that provide a different character to each of these five types of knowledge.

(a) The first variety of non-eternal knowledge or cognition is the one that is produced through the instrumentality of the five sense-organs.

(b) The second form of non-eternal knowledge is 'Doubt' which is produced through the instrumentality of *manas* as a mode of *antaḥkaraṇa*. Since the function of *manas* is to synthesize and analyse, Doubt always resorts to the instrumentality of *manas*. Moreover, *manas* is creative of other forms of knowledge also. As described in the *śruti* [1], they are desire (*kāma*), conceiving (*saṁkalpa*), faith (*śraddhā*), absence of faith (*aśraddhā*), patience (*dhṛti*), absence of patience (*adhṛti*), shame (*ḥrī*) and fear (*bhī*). Pleasure and pain are also caused by *manas* since they are not associated with the senses.

(c) The third variety of non-eternal knowledge is that in which *buddhi* or intellect acts as a means and medium for the expression of

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (I, V, 3).

knowledge. Though 'ego' is the main cause in the generation of the false knowledge of Self as identical with body yet this type of knowledge is never without the assistance of *buddhi*. The main function of *buddhi* is the production of a decisive cognition as against 'doubt' which is always undecided and vacillatory in character. According to Puruṣottama, decision (*niścaya*), false knowledge (*viparyāsa*) and memory (*smṛti*) are the different modes of knowledge that are expressed through the instrumentality of intellect (*buddhi*).

(d) The fourth form of non-eternal knowledge is the dream-cognition. According to Vallabhites, *ahaṁkāra* (ego) in association with *buddhi* is the ground and the cause of dream-appearance and its knowledge; as such the instrumentality of *ahaṁkāra* is the chief determinant in dream-cognition.

(e) 'Indeterminate Knowledge' is the fifth and the last mode of the non-eternal variety. Production of object-less or indeterminate cognition is the function of *citta*. As the Vallabhites explain, the indeterminate cognition of the self during the deep-sleep-state is caused by the *citta* which cognizes the self as different from itself.

Thus there are ten forms of knowledge out of which the first four are eternal and the other six are non-eternal. Puruṣottama, however, warns that the non-eternality of the six forms of knowledge should not be understood either in the Buddhist sense of momentariness or in the sense that is exists [1] only for three moments. Even is this state knowledge is, for the Vallabhites, as lasting and permanent as the external objects of Nature such as pot, cloth etc. The opponent's contention that the assertion of the permanent character of such knowledge would imply the continuous illumination of one and the same object does not hold good because even though a particular cognition is removed by another cognition due to the impact and influence of the conditions generative of the latter cognition yet the former is present in a subtle form as *saṁskāra* (latent tendency) and is thus never totally lost. The psychological analysis of the event of cognition as changing and giving place to new would reveal, according to Puruṣottama, that this whole occurrence is caused by the predominance of *rajas* and *tamas* in the mind; the predominance of *tamas* throws a sheath of cover over the preceding cognition whereas

The Vallabhite concept of non-eternality of knowledge.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 2

the predominance of the *rajas* creates the new one. Thus to the Vallabhites the intention behind the concept of the 'non-eternality' of knowledge is the communication of the truth that though knowledge is permanent and lasting in character yet its appearance, in its empirical form, is subject to change consequent upon the rise of the different sets of conditions such as the change in the object, environment, etc. Thus knowledge is indestructible; it only remains hidden and veiled by the operation of *māyā*. 'Words' and 'objects' that appear to our experience as necessary causes for the production of cognition act only as conditions for its manifestation and not for its origination. Till the knowledge is unmanifested they, the 'words' and 'objects', act as conditions for its manifestation; when it gets manifested they provide the form and character of its illumination. This phenomenal and empirical aspect of knowledge or cognition is expressed in language as *buddhi* or *cetanā*.

(B) FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE ACCORDING TO GUṆAS

Phenomenal cognition caused by the three *guṇas*. The three types of knowledge.

It is a settled conviction with the Vallabhites that every event of phenomenal cognition has its occurrence due to the operation and interaction of the three *guṇas,* viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and that in each cognition there is the predominance of any one of these- i.e., either of the *sattva*, or the *rajas*, or the *tamas* — and these may rightly be taken as the determinants for further classification of knowledge. Thus in accordance with the principle of the predominance of the *guṇas* [1] 'knowledge' may rightly be classified into three : (1) Sāttvika Knowledge, (2) Rājasika Knowledge and (3) Tāmasika Knowledge.

(a) *Sāttvika Knowledge*

Vallabha, in his *Subodhinī* and other commentaries, is vociferously assertive that the rise of *sattva-guṇa* in the *antaḥkaraṇa* is productive of *pramā* [2] or right and valid knowledge, both of the empirical and the trans-phenomenal variety. On the basis of the *Gītā* where it is declared that 'from *sattva* results knowledge', [3] he contends as a principle that in the absence [4] of *sattva* no knowledge is ever

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 2
2. *Subodhinī* on śloka (X, 2, 34).
3. Satvāt saṁjāyate jñānaṁ. (*Bhagavadgīta*, śloka, XV, 17).
4. Satvābhave jñānaṁ na syāt. (*Subodhinī* on śloka, X, 2, 34).

possible. Even where knowledge is produced by the study or the hearing of the *śāstras* (scriptures) there is a concomitant and spontaneous manifestation of *sattva*. All knowledge about Self or Brahman is possible only in an *antaḥkaraṇa* totally over whelmedy by the predominance of *sattva*; gradually as the mind is predominated by *sattva*, and thus purified, it obtains the illumination of 'self-knowledge' with the consequent removal of ignorance. Moreover, the knowledge of God or Brahman, which is destructive of all sense of diversity [1] and is resplendently illuminative of the notion and feeling of unity in the whole cosmos, is a possibility only in a soul whose heart has been purified, without any blemish, by the blazing fire of *sattva*.

Definition of Sāttvika Knowledge as *Pramā*.

Puruṣottamaji Mahārāja, therefore defines Sāttvika-knowledge as *pramā* [2] or valid knowledge which always continues to be non-contradicted in future. The character of valid knowledge as *abādhita* or 'non-contradicted' is a possibility only because it has been ascertained by the method of agreement and disagreement that the presence of *sattva* alone — in the *antaḥkaraṇa* — is the *raison d'etre* of the perfect validity of knowledge.

Non-contradiction and validity of knowledge due to *sattva*.

The *sāttvika* element in the *antaḥkaraṇa* can be increased by numerous ways. If all such things as the Scriptures, [3] water, human association, space, time, action, birth, concentration, mantra and *saṁskāras* (latent tendencies) be *sāttvika* in character they cause the increase of the *sāttvika* attribute in the mind of the one associated with these; on the other hand, if they are *rājasika* or *tāmasika* they result in the predominance of *rajas* and *tamas*. So for one who desires to obtain the ***summum-bonum*** [4] of life it is expedient that he should associate himself only with such things that are purely *sāttvika* in character and avoid all that is *rājasika* or *tāmasika*. With the gradual increase in *sattva* the yogins and the bhaktas are confronted with the

Conditions prompting the rise of *sattva*.

1. Ajñānanāśakaṁ vijñānaṁ ātmānubhavaḥ. Bhedanāśakaṁ tu bhagavadvijñānaṁ.
   (*Subodhinī* on śloka X, 2, 34).
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3.
3. Sukhawal : *Vallabha Saṁpradāya Aur unke Siddhānta* (Hindi), p. 45.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3.

diverse truths of existence and ultimately with the full effulgence of the *śuddha-sattva* they acquire the unitary and monistic knowledge of the One, Immutable Being. The realization of the One Self or Brahman is the supreme culmination of the sāttvika-knowledge.

(b) *Rājasika Knowledge*

Rājasika Knowledge is determinate and egoistic in character.

This type of knowledge is a product of collocation of conditions (*sāmagrī*) that are inherently *rājasika* or contain the predominance of the *rajas* attribute. Whereas the sāttvika-knowledge is always unitary, synthetic and integral and has the tendency towards a monistic appraisal of things, the rājasika-knowledge is always determinate and pluralistic in character. As the *Gītā* explains, "The knowledge by which one sees the undivided, imperishable substance in all beings which are divided, should be known as *sāttvika*. But the knowledge by which one sees as distinct, in all beings, different entities of various kinds should be known to be *rājasika*."[1] The preponderance of *rajas*, leading to Rājasika Knowledge is, therefore, the cause of all differentiation and the notion of the 'plural' in our approach towards objects.

As this type of knowledge is determinate[2] and pluralistic in character, it alone is suited for empirical and practical human behaviour. All mental and physical activities caused by *manas* (mind), the senses and the vital-breath (*prāṇa*) are an outcome of the rājasika-knowledge, the most important character of which is its perennial association with the sense of 'ego'. As every type of mundane and practical knowledge and activity is dependent on the foundational concept of the ego — the idea of the 'I' and the 'mine'[3] (*sannipāta*) — the notion of the ego and the false identification of the self with the body form the backbone of the rājasika-knowledge.

Obviously, rājasika-knowledge has a highly pragmatic significance and is useful for man's existence in world; yet it is not only irrelevant, but is also obstructive, in the attainment of the Final[4] Truth

1. *Bhagavadgītā*, ślokas (XVIII, 20 to 21).
2. Tatra rājasaṁ jñānaṁ savikalpa eva... Idaṁ ca vyavahāropayogī. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3) and 'Rajoyuktasya manasaḥ saṁkalpaḥ savikalpakaḥ. (*Srībhāgavata*, śloka XI, 13, 10).
3. *Bhāgavata*, śloka, (XI, 25, 6).
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3.

or the *paramārtha*. It is only when the influence of the *rajas* has gradually decreased to the point of nullity with the proportional increase in the *sattva* that the real attainment and wisdom accrues to the aspirant. The validity of the rājasika-knowledge is, therefore, only pragmatic and relative without [1] any claim to transcendental and absolute validity.

Indeterminate Knowledge.

As mentioned above the *rājasika* form of knowledge is always determinate yet when we discuss the origin and the psychological genesis of any fact of determinate or rājasika-knowledge, we always find, according to Vallabhites, that the cognition — with the mediacy of senses — is always preceded by an indeterminate knowledge [2] (*nirvikalpaka*) apprehending only the being or the existence of the object. This apprehension of a thing only as 'being' divested of all characters is caused not by the *rajas* but by the preponderance of the *sattva*-attribute. As Puruṣottama argues, "Because this-the indeterminate [3] knowledge-refers merely to the 'being' of a thing without any determination it is certainly a product of sattva." This indeterminate [4] knowledge is, however, not the cause of the origin of the posterior determinate cognitions because, as the Vallabhites argue, there is no valid argument in favour of this assertion. We shall, however, revert to this question while discussing the Vāllabha theory of perception.

(c) *Tāmasika-knowledge*

This type of knowledge is generated by such conditions that are utterly *tāmasika* in character and have the preponderance of the attribute of *tamas*. Its nature is elaborated in the *Bhagavadgītā* where it is asserted that 'whilst that knowledge which is confined to a single product, as if it were the whole, which is irrational, not founded upon truth, and trivial, is declared to be *tāmasika*.' [5] This knowledge is thus productive of delusion and infatuation and even in the practical walk of life aims at falsification of truth. It is thus the worst variety of human [6]

1. *Ibid*. p. 3
2. *Ibid*, p. 3
3. Tacca sanmātrāvagāhī ekavidham eva. (*Ibid*, p. 3)
4. *Ibid*, p. 3.
5. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XVIII, 22).
6. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3.

knowledge found mostly in the atheists and individuals of utterly low and down-trodden societies.

(C) FORMS OF DETERMINATE KNOWLEDGE

Determinate knowledge is ordinarily of two kinds, viz., *viśiṣṭa-buddhi* and *samūhālambana-buddhi*. The first occurs in such cases where the knowledge of an entity appears as qualified with the knowledge of the other, for example, the cognition of 'a man with a stick.'[1] The second type of determinate knowledge, i.e., the *samūhālambana-buddhi* means 'knowledge' as conglomeration of entities (e.g., 'a stick and a book'). 'The knowledge of simple objects (such as a jug) is regarded as an associated knowledge. All these varied types of determinate cognitions are in reality of one type, because they all consist of the simple process of revelation of being by the senses and an attribution of names and forms by the *antaḥkaraṇa*'.[2]

The author of *Prasthānaratnākara* classifies[3] rājasika-determinate knowledge into five kinds, viz., (1) doubt, (*saṁśaya*), (2) error (*viparyāsa*), (3) right-knowledge (*niścaya*), (4) memory (*smṛti*) and (5) sleep (*svāpa*) on the authority of the *Bhāgavata*[4] which classifies the intellect (*buddhi*), according to its functioning, under these heads. As *buddhi-vṛtti* is identical with determinate-knowledge, the Bhāgavata-classification may be rightly adopted for understanding the forms of determinate cognition.

(a) *Doubt (saṁśaya)*

'Doubt is defined as the apprehension of two or more opposite attributes or characters in the same object.'[5] The most glaring example of 'doubt' is the particular case in which a person while viewing an object from a distance is at a fix whether the object is a bare trunk of a tree or a man. The reason for this state of indecision is the subjective apprehension in the mind of such contradictory attributes as curvature, the tree-hole, indicative of its being a trunk, and hands, feet etc. signifying a man. On account of the association of these contradictory attributes generated

Definition.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 5.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 338.
3. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 5.
4. *Bhāgavata*, ślokas (III, 26, 29-30).
5. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 6, and S.N., Dasgupta : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 338.

by defects — distance in this case — there is only a general apprehension of the object without any decisive cognition about its characters. Such a state of cognition is called 'doubt'.

'Doubt' is classified as [1] : (1) Ordinary (*sama*) and Superior (*utkaṭa*). The first i.e. the 'ordinary' may again be differentiated and classified as 'pure' (*śuddha*) and 'narrow' (*saṁkīrṇa*). The 'ordinary' type of 'doubt' occurs where the subjective latent tendencies (*saṁskāras*) are equally opposed to the cognitive apprehension and the conditions generative of such an apprehension. The 'doubt' whether the object is 'silver or not' whether 'it is tree or not', whether 'the cloth is white or not' are the illustrations of this kind. This form of 'doubt' is known as the *śuddha-sama* variety. But when the expanse of the 'doubt' is narrowed down [2] and it takes the form 'whether the object is a trunk or a man' as a consequence of the rise of the *saṁskāras* indicative of human qualities, it is termed as the 'narrow-ordinary' doubt (*saṁkīrṇa-sama*).

Classification.

There are, however, cases where a perfect equipollence is maintained between the subjective *saṁskāras* and the objective conditions of the object. But when the principle of equipollence is disturbed and there is an excess in the strength of either the *saṁskāras* or the objective conditions — associated with light and the resultant manifestation of the 'character' of the object — there is a slight illumination (*sphūrti*) of positive determinations and characteristics of the object. Such a kind of 'doubt' pertains to the second category, i.e., the 'superior' (*utkaṭa*) one. According to Puruṣottama, probability (*sambhāvanā*), where [3] the chances in favour of one point of view are greater, is a special variety of the *utkaṭa* category. *Tarka* [4] which is defined by Vallabhites as the argument of a particular individual not necessarily acceptable to others is, as such, a case [5] of probability (*sambhāvanā*) and should, therefore, be included in the ' superior-category ' or the *utkaṭa-koti*.

Probability.

Tarka — a case of probability.

1. Sa ca dvividhaḥ samaḥ utkaṭakotiśca. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 6).
2. *Ibid.*
3. Sambhāvanāpi utkaṭakoṭika saṁśayaviśeṣa eva (*Ibid*, p. 6)
4. Tarko nāma svotprekṣitā yuktiḥ. Sā ekoktā nānyairangīkriyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 538)
5. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 6.

(b) *Error (viparyāsa)*

Error or *viparyāsa* is defined as the objective apprehension contradictory to the real characters [1] of the object of sense-contact. The illustrations of 'error' are such famous cases of illusion as the apprehension of silver in conch-shell or the snake in a rope. Unlike 'doubt', there is no oscillation in the case of 'error' between various contradictory positions; on the other hand, in error there is a perfect certainty about the truth of apprehension; it is this certitude that distinguishes an error from a doubt. Another point of importance with regard to error is the fact of its objective presentation due to which dream-cognitions and memory, which are purely subjective in character, are excluded from its gamut.

Definition of Error.

Distinction from Doubt.

Error is caused, according to Puruṣottama, by the presence of defects either in the [2] object or in the instruments of apprehension, e.g., sense-organs, but as the defect of the instruments are primarily responsible for the creation of 'error', it is generally said to be caused by the defects of instruments. We shall, however, discuss this problem at length while undertaking an exposition of the Vallabhite theroy of illusion in this chapter.

Cause of Error.

(c) *Right-knowledge (niścaya or pramā)*

Right-knowledge (*niścaya*) which is also called *pramā* is defined as 'a valid or correct [3] experience'. Validity here consists in the real apprehension of the object of sense-contact produced under spatio-temporal conditions in exactly the same form and with the same characters as they belong to the object; validity is thus the true representation of the object of apprehension. Right-knowledge is thus different from all other forms of determinate knowledge, viz., doubt, error and sleep; because this knowledge is perfectly certain it is different from 'doubt' and as it correctly represents its object it is not 'error'. Moreover, the objective and external character of this form of knowledge precludes the possibility of its identification with 'sleep'.

Definition.

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, 6.
3. *Ibid*, p. 7

Right-knowledge (*yathārtha-anubhava*)[1], according to Puruṣottama, is of two kinds; (1) Immediate Right knowledge and (2) Mediate Right Knowledge. Knowledge generated through sense-object-contact is called 'immediate knowledge' or 'perception' whereas all cognitions produced without the involvement of sense-object-contact are termed 'mediate'. More about the nature and varieties of these two kinds of right-knowledge will, however, be discussed while elaborating the Vallabhite theory of the means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) in this chapter.

Kinds of right-knowledge.

(d) *Memory (smṛti)*

Memory is the knowledge generated purely by the past *saṁskāras*[2] or latent impressions of the previous apprehensions. As the Vallabhites give credence to the theory that *saṁskāras* are only past experiences subsisting in a subtle form, they have no difficulty in explaining the possibility of the revival of the apprehension of the past object in the present human consciousness. Memory is, thus, caused neither by sense-object-contact nor by sleep but by past *saṁskāras* alone; it is, therefore, recognised as a different variety of determinate-knowledge.

Nature of Memory.

(e) *Sleep (svāpa)*

The fifth form of determinate-knowledge is the knowledge of dreams. As the important type of determinate knowledge[3] during sleep is that of dreams, the Vallabhites use the terms '*svāpa*' (sleep) and 'dream' often in an identical sense. The knowledge of dreams, which are unique creations of *māyā*, is different from all other varieties of waking experience; it is, therefore, classified under a separate category. A full length discussion about the Vallabhite conception of dream will be undertaken in a separate section of this chapter.

Nature of Sleep.

Suṣupti or deep-sleep is only an internal state of dreams in which there is only the illumination of the self; as such it is included within the 'sleep'.

Suṣupti.

1. *Ibid*, p. 8.
2. *Ibid*, p. 8.
3. Svāpastu svapnasṛṣṭiviṣayakaṁ jñānaṁ tena na pūrvokte antarbhāvāt. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 9).

There are other forms of determinate knowledge such as 'thought' (*cintā*) and 'recognition' (*pratyabhijñā*); since they can be easily classified in any of the above mentioned five categories, the Vallabhites have refrained from according them a separate status. An analysis of the nature of the mental process of thought (*cintā*) may reveal that it usually oscillates between different positions leading to uncertainty and doubt. Another aspect and form of thought is concentration; this too is nothing but a variety of 'memory'. There is thus no valid reason for assigning to *cintā* or thought a separate place and category within determinate knowledge when it can rightly be comprehended either within 'doubt' or 'memory'.

Thought included within Doubt and Memory.

Similarly, the claim of 'recognition'[1] (*pratyabhijñā*) as a novel variety of determinate-knowledge is also discarded by the Vallabhites on the ground that 'recognition' being a kind of certain and right - knowledge has every justification for inclusion within the compass of *niścaya* or *pramā*. When a man is met with and then recognised as the same Devadatta there is a definite, certain and right knowledge about him notwithstanding the fact that this knowledge is generated with the assistance of memory caused by the past latent tendencies (*saṁskāras*). Just as in the case of repetition, the *saṁskāras* of prior experience are instrumental in strengthening the acquired knowledge, in recognition also the role of memory and past *saṁskāras* is only auxiliary without providing any justification for the inclusion of 'recognition' within 'memory' which is caused directly by *saṁskāras*. What is important in recognition is the character of its certitude and validity; as such for the Vallabhites it is always prudent to categorize it under '*niścaya*' or '*pramā*'; i.e., right-knowledge.

Recognition included within *Pramā*.

(D) THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

The foregoing discussion regarding the forms of knowledge and their classification, as undertaken by the Vallabhites, obviously discloses their acknowledgement of the dual nature and status of knowledge; the first of these is its aspect as pure, transcendental and unitary consciousness, the *cit*, forming the essential attribute of Brahman and the other its subsequent manifestation in phenomena as empirical knowledge involving, necessarily, the schema

Dual nature of Knowledge as transcendental and phenomenal.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 9.

of subject-object-relation. As the first four eternal forms of knowledge reveal, the ultimate pure, unitary and transcendental Brahman Consciousness which is the ground, the foundation of all subsequent manifestations and devolutions of Consciousness in creation-though related to Brahman as 'sunshine' is to 'sun'– manifests itself as an attribute only at the second stage of cosmic evolution. The manifestation or the evolution of the consciousness involving the distinction between the 'word' and the 'object' is an occurrence in the fourth stage of the evolution of the eternal variety.

The individual-soul, which is an aspect or *aṁśa* of Brahman, has also, in its ultimate aspect, pure and eternal consciousness as its essential attribute so much so that it is inseparably related to it. Prior to its manifestation and separation from Brahman, the jīva was indentical with Brahman and, therefore, partook in His essential Conscious Being. During its existence as a transmigratory creature in the world it is associated with nescience (*avidyā*) and in the end with the advent and mediation of *vidyā* (knowledge) it acquires its pristine and primeval glory– the Effulgent Being in possession of eternal, pure and indestructible transcendental consciousness.

Pure and eternal consciousness as the essential attribute of jīva.

Though the individual-soul by its very nature and essence is a conscious Being yet in its phenomenal ramblings, its consciousness degenerates and deploys into the empirical veriety which is essentially determinate and subjected to logical categories and schema of the subject-object-relation. Thus it is only in its empirical and phenomenal aspect that knowledge acquires the character of 'determinateness' and subjection to logical categories. It is this stage of knowledge which involves the necessity of the triple distinction between the subject (*pramātā*), the object (*prameya*) and the cognition (*pramāṇa*). The appearance of the logical categories and the schema of subject-object-relation is an event only in the phenomenal aspect of knowledge — which is a sufficiently later evolution of Consciousness — and has no trace whatsoever in the higher and the transcendental states of Consciousness.

Degeneration of jīva's pure consciousness into empirical variety.

Empirical knowledge determinate and subject to logical categories.

The students of Indian Philosophy are well aware of the heated

Nature of Knowledge in Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta.

debate that has centred round the problem whether knowledge, in its essence, is determinate or indeterminate. The philosophers of the Schools of Sāṁkhya and Śāṁkara Vedānta, professing the essential character of consciousness as pure and transcendental, a — priori and foundational, decided that knowledge in its essential nature, in its aspect as *svarūpajñāna*, is always indeterminate, impartite and one; its phenomenal appearance as determinate, consisting of parts and manifold is a consequence of its association with the internal-organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*) and its *vṛttis*. Thus it is only in its aspect as *vṛttijñāna* that consciousness acquires a phenomenal and empirical status to be operated and constructed in accordance with logical categories and the schema of subject-object-relation and acquires a determinate character.

The standpoints of Rāmānuja and Madhva.

The prominent Vaiṣṇavite thinkers of the Schools of Rāmānuja and Madhva were dead against this transcendental exposition of the nature and function of knowledge. To them, any idea of knowledge in the absence of either the 'subject' or the 'object' is impossible. It is an essential feature of knowledge that it always refers to some object; knowledge, therefore, is always determinate (*saviśeṣa*) and consists of parts; it is never partless (*akhaṇḍa*) and attributeless (*nirviśeṣa*) as conceived in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. To describe a thing partless and attributeless involves a tacit assumption of parts and attributes in a thing because without attributing part-less-ness [1] and attribute-less-ness to it, it would be impossible to describe it as partless and attributeless. Thus, as they argue, the very idea of knowledge assumes that it is never without parts and attributes; it is always determinate and attributive. Rāmānuja went to the extent of acknow-ledging that even in indeterminate perception some specific characters are discerned which are later on supplemented with the manifestation of common [2]— characters or class-characters to form what is known as determinate knowledge. There is, however, no shred of evidence on the basis of experience that may justify the theory that knowledge or consciousness is *nirviśeṣa* or indeterminate and partless.

1. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 22.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 166.

The Vallabhite attitude and opinion on this problem, as gathered from their scattered assertions in their different works, seems to favour neither the Advaitin's zeal for discarding all determinations and attributions in the ultimate status of Being with the consequent position that consciousness is always indeterminate and impartite nor are they hell bent upon vouchsafing the universality of the determinate character of knowledge with the associated belief that the categories of logic and the schema of subject-object-relation are equally applicable both to the phenomenal and transcendental verities and their associated aspects of knowledge or consciousness. The Vallabhite exposition of the *sāttvika* form of knowledge is a clear enunciation of their faith in the unitary, monistic and integral character of ultimate knowledge; the more knowledge is unified and integral the more it is higher in the transcendental rungs of consciousness leading to the Ultimate Integral Experience. Vallabha, in his *Subodhinī*, is clear and assertive that both in the events of 'Self-realization (*ātmānubhava*) and God-realization (*bhagavatvijñānaṁ*) in which there is an integral illumination of Pure Non-dualism (*śuddhādvaita*) the integral knowledge is not characterised by the subject-object-relation'[1]. Such transcendental knowledge crosses the barriers of all logical categories and relations and is not determinate in the empirical and phenomenal sense of the term.

Vallabhite standpoint denouncing both the extremes.

Ultimate knowledge unitary, integral and beyond logical categories.

But how such a want of determinateness — whose meaning and sense is available to us only in empirical cognition — can be reconciled with the Vallabhite Philosophy of Brahman as a Concrete and Personal Individual with Infinite celestial attributes and determinations? After all, Brahman is the object of scriptural enquiry, is the object of the devotion of the *bhaktas* and with His will reveals Himself in the impatient agonised and the tortured heart of the Puṣṭi-bhakta. How can then it be asserted that the supreme aspect of knowledge is bereft of the subject-object-relation or any sense of determination? This contradiction may find its reconciliation if we consider the proper import of the denunciation of logical categories

1. Ajñānanāśakaṁ vijñānaṁ ātmānubhavaḥ. Bhedanāśakaḥ tu bhagavadvijñānaṁ ubhayoḥ sākṣātkāre dehādhyāsanivṛttiḥ śuddhādvaitaṁ ca sphurati. Tacca jñānaṁ na viṣayaviṣayibhāvena. (*Subodhinī* on śloka X, 2, 34).

in transcendental knowledge. What they seem to suggest is the fact that the transcendental situation should not be realised on the basis of the laws essentially bound to phenomena or the *prākṛtika* order of things. What transcends Nature (*Prakṛti*) or Phenomena should not be understood with the meaning and implications of empirical determination. Knowledge in its transcendental aspect is always unitary and integral; yet even in this integrality the consciousness of difference is always a possibility. As we shall discuss in another chapter of this book, the emancipated souls are blessed by the Lord with a celestial body for participating in His Divine Play where He endows His liberated devotee with a consciousness of difference. But all this sense of difference, objectivity and subjectivity of the transcendental state has a seat high above the balcony of Time and Space and frowns at the very human endeavour of profligation with debased empirical variety. The same sense is conveyed when Vallabha contends that the knowledge of the Self is obtainable neither by the natural senses nor by any [1] other means but only through either the process of Yoga or the divine-sight accorded to the *bhakta* by God Himself. Though the ultimate state of Puruṣottama, the Brahman, in the Vallabhite system is a state of Positive Being with infinite attributes yet the sense and the meaning which we human beings attribute to 'determinate-ness' has absolutely no relation to the transcendental order of consciousness because 'determinate-ness' is always a result of the influence of *rajas* which, from every point of view, is an obstacle in the attainment of right knowledge. The Vallabhites are, therefore, assertive that the ultimate real knowledge of the truth of Being is a possibility only when there is a predominance of the *sattvaguṇa* which, by nature, leads to unitary and undifferentiated knowledge. The Indeterminate and Determinate are, as a matter of fact, the two complementary aspects of the Absolute whose full realization dawns only when the aspiring soul has an integral pure vision. The ultimate and original Consciousness, as described by Śrī Aurobindo in a similar context, "would be a Consciousness of the Infinite and necessarily unitarian in its view of diversity, intergral, all accepting, all embracing, all discriminating because all-determining, an individual whole-vision. It would see the essence of things and regard

The Indeterminate and the Determinate are the two aspects of the Absolute.

1. *Tattvadīpanibandha, Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, ślokas 55-56.

all forms and movements as phenomena and consequence of the essential Reality, motions and formations of its power of being." [1] Such a consciousness is the real nature of ultimate knowledge. The Vāllabha School, therefore, in its considered opinion, is of the view that though knowledge in its empirical and phenomenal aspect is always determinate, its transcendental position is always indeterminate from the standpoint and the standards of intellectual human knowledge. Knowledge is, therefore, both indeterminate and determinate.

As this discussion may reveal, the character of the transcendental indeterminate-ness of knowledge or consciousness in the Vāllabha School is quite different from the one professed in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. To the Śaṁkarites the pure transcendental knowledge is an indeterminate homogeneity involving the absence and total negation of all affirmations and attributions. The Vallabhites, on the other hand, conceive and emphasize that the indeterminate transcendental knowledge or Consciousness of the Absolute status of Brahman is an Effulgence of Divine Attributes in which there is a total denial of all natural and *prākṛtika* determinations and attributions. The philosophers of the Rāmānuja and the Mādhva Schools seem to exhibit the propensities of a zealot when they assert that there is never a possibility of knowledge which is not determinate.

Vallabhite indeterminateness of knowledge different from the Śaṁkarite.

(a) *Relation between Knowledge and its Object*

The foregoing exposition of the nature of knowledge in Vallabhite philosophy may drive home to us their fundamental contention that knowledge in its ultimate transcendental and pure status is devoid of the subject-object-relation and the question of 'objectivity' has no relevance in this state. It is only subsequent to the appearance of the Will in Brahman to be many that there is the evolution of the 'other', characterised as the object of Brahman's *īkṣaṇa*. This transcendental objectification is a manifestation belonging to the first stage of evolution wherein knowledge has its appearance as the attribute of Brahman and for that matter that of the individual soul also. But the real operation of the schema of the subject-object-relation and the intellectual categories of knowledge is confined only to its

Objectivity belongs only to empirical knowledge.

1. Śrī Aurobindo : *Life Divine*, p. 424.

empirical or phenomenal variety. Thus the problem of objectivity in Vallabhite philosophy is a matter pertaining predominantly to the phenomenal plane of knowledge and there is hardly any justification for seeking its presence in the ultimate transcendental state as endeavoured in the philosophies of Rāmānuja and Madhva.

Relation of cognition and its object is *svarūpasambandha.*

In empirical knowledge — as a result of the evolution of the creative process — there is a distinct manifestation of difference between 'the subject', 'the object' and 'the cognition' and there is also a relation between the act of cognition and its object. This relation between 'cognition' or knowledge and its 'object' is explained by Puruṣottama as one of *Svarūpasambandha* [1] implying that this relation forms the very nature or the essence of this variety of knowledge. 'Objectivity', therefore, according to him, is the natural relation (*svarūpasambandha*) subsisting between 'knowledge' and its 'object'; this very relation when referring to knowledge constitutes its 'subjectivity' and when it refers to its external objects implies 'objectivity'. Thus for the Vallabhites who are the earnest protagonists of the reality of both the subjective and the objective forms of world the relation between the 'subject' and the 'object' is explicitly one of *svarūpasambandha* bearing strict similarity with the Nyāya standpoint asserting the revealatory character of knowledge and emphasizing that objectivity consists in being revealed to knowledge. As explained by Udayana, '*viṣayatva* consists in the special character of the knowledge of a real existent which is determind by it and, therefore, *viṣayatva* may be defined as that which, while independent of any other relation, is the determinant of knowledge, whereas, in its own nature it is undetermined by it just as a jar, when perceived, determines the form of knowledge though in itself it is unaffected by that knowledge.' [2] The Vallabhites in their assessment of the nature and the function of empirical knowledge are [3] almost in agreement with the Nyāya opinion and are content with the realistic hypothesis that the existence of external world is independent of knowledge and its intellectual constructions and that 'objectivity' (*prameyatva*) consists

1. Viṣayatā ca jñānārthayoḥ svarūpasambandhaviśeṣaḥ.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 4).
2. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 58.
3. Tena nyāyamatamevātra samyak iti dik. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 5).

Objectivity is real and not *anirvacanīya*.

in being correctly revealed by knowledge which by nature is revelatory and self-illuminating. The Vallabhites are quite repugnant to the Advaitic standpoint relegating 'objectivity' to mere *anirvacanīya* or superimposed order because they believe that the external world is not a superimposition on the Ultimate Transcendental Existence and Consciousness but is a real evolute of the state or the status of Brahman.

Two kinds of objectivities- *viṣaya* and *viṣayatā*.

In the prominent works of Vallabha and his followers we have a detailed account of the two kinds of objectivities, viz., (1) the objective-objectivity and (2) subjective-objectivity; these have been technically termed by them as *viṣaya* and *viṣayatā* respectively. This distinction is rooted in the epistemological analysis and belief that there is always a distinction between the act, the content and the object of knowledge- a theory vigorously advocated by Meinong [1] in Contemporary Western Philosophy—and that the validity of knowledge

The nature of *viṣaya*.

demands a total agreement between the content of perception and its object. The Vallabhites being realists to the core, are ardent advocates of the philosophy of the independence of the external world, which, as they explain, is in its name and form a peculiar manifestation of Brahman. As Brahman in Vāllabha philosophy is always immanent, the infinite variety of names and forms in the universe is covertly contained in Him so much so that every entity contains implicitly all other innumerable forms [2]. The reason for the manifestation of only one form and the related non-manifestation of all other forms lies in the Will of the Lord or Brahman who, through His Desire, conceals all other forms and manifests only one. Similarly, all words [3] potentially contain the meanings and powers of all others but the fact that a 'word' expresses only one meaning has its cause in Brahman's Will which veils all others and expresses only one. This sport of the manifestation of only one name and form notwithstanding the implicit containment of all other names [4] and forms is expressed by the Vallabhites by the terms 'rūpa-līlā' and 'nāma-

1. Mukerji, A.C. : *Self, Thought and Reality*, p. 133.
2. Ataḥ sarvasya sarvarūpatvāt sarvasya sarvatra vidyamānatvāt ca sarvasya brahmatvam iti śuddho brahmavādaḥ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, Ch. I, p. 7).
3. Ibid, p. 8 to 9.
4. T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, Kārikā 9, with K.N. Mishra's commentary, p. 32 to 33.

līlā'. Thus, all external objects, for example, 'a pot', 'a cloth', being nothing else but Brahman in a particular manifested form are absolutely real and their objectivity too is real. This objectivity belonging to the external objects of world, including the human body- the objective objectivity - is termed '*viṣaya*' in the literature of the Vāllabha School.

The nature of *viṣayatā*.

The other form of objectivity - the subjective objectivity or *viṣayatā* - is the mother of all illusions and false-knowledge. In his commentary on the particular śloka of Skandha II [1] of the *Bhāgavata* describing the nature of *māyā*, Vallabha reproduces the salient features of *viṣayatā*. The special power of *māyā* by which it deludes the transmigratory [2] ignorant souls (*jīvas*) creates in their intellects illusory concepts similar to the real objects and thrusts them over them with the result that in the event of cognition of the real objects the illusory ones, those caused by *māyā*, are also perceived giving rise to the false and illusory knowledge. Therefore, the knowledge of the ignorant and the deluded souls is only illusory (*māyika*) and consequently the objective external world remains independent and unblemished by the subjective defects of the individual soul. Vallabha emphatically asserts in *Subodhinī* that 'it is the deluded intellect that comprehends the objects differently, not that the objects [3] themselves become different'. An illusory experience or false knowledge has no capacity to influence or construct the existence [4] and appearance of the real objects of external world. "Just as a person in a moving vehicle feels that the objects he passes by are moving but, in reality, movement does not belong to those objects, in the same way, the illusion (*viṣayatā*) soils the perception, while the object (*viṣaya* namely, the *jagat*) is nothing but Brahman." [5] Thus the objectivity or the content of an illusory perception being under the influence of the subjective operations of *māyā* is necessarily a 'creation of mind' and has no objective basis; it is why we have termed this objectivity as 'subjective-objectivity' (*viṣayatā*).

A doubt may, however, be expressed in this regard. If the content

1. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (II, 9, 33).
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Ch, I, p. 10.
3. Tayā vyāmohitā buddhiḥ padārthān anyathā manyate na tu padārthāḥ anyathā bhavanti. (*Subodhinī* on śloka II, 9, 33).
4. Bhrāntapratītestu na arthaniyāmakatvam. (*Ibid*).
5. Marfatia, M. : *The Philosophy of Vallabhācārya*, p. 31.

The reason for attributing objectivity to illusory percepts.

of an illusory experience is false or *māyika*, why should Vallabha at all consider this content as an 'object'? Vallabha replies this objection by arguing in his *Subodhinī* that if no 'objectivity' is attributed to illusory-percepts then these experiences would have to be object-less. When a person after rotating swiftly in a whirl stands still he finds all the outside objects circling around him. This illusory experience of the movement of external objects, which in reality are static, must have some sort of objectivity, otherwise either the external world should be taken as the object of illusory [1] experience, rendering it unreal and false, or the experience should itself be considered objectless (*nirviṣaya*) which, however, is contradictory. As such a separate objectivity should be attributed to illusory perceptions.

Difference between *viṣaya* and *viṣayatā*.

This is why Vallabha terms it '*viṣayatā*' in order to distinguish it from the real-objectivity of external world, the *viṣaya*, which is a manifestation of Brahman and is absolutely real. '*Viṣayatā* or subjective-objectivity is caused by *māyā* whereas the *viṣaya* is the Brahman Himself'. In the example of the circular rotation [2] of man, mentioned above, the illusory percept - the moving external objects- is *viṣayatā* whereas the objects themselves, the evolved manifestations of Brahman, are *viṣaya*. The experience and objectivity of all objects of world such as the jar, the cloth etc. are, therefore, real and not unreal as the Śaṁkarite or the Buddhist would imagine.

The *viṣayatā* or illusory objectivity, as explained by Vallabha, is of two kinds. The first of these being the outcome of the veiling power [3] of *māyā* (*ācchādikā*) prevents the illumination of the real attributes of Brahman in the objects whereas the second is objective misrepresentation in which, under the influence of *māyā*, an illusory percept similar to the real object is created. Thus on account of its veiling and misrepresenting powers *māyā* gives rise to illusory perception and its objectivity, frequently encountered by us during the course of our worldly existence. According to Vallabha and his followers, the ignorant souls who, having no discrimination between

1. Anyathā bhramadṛṣtyāgrihītaṁ jagat bhramarūpamevasyāt. Ato viṣaye viṣayatā kācit svīkartavyā..... (*Subodhinī* on śloka II, 9, 33).
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 13 with K.N. Mishra's Translation (Hindi).
3. This distinction bears similarity with the Advaitic differentiation of the powers of *māyā* as *āvaraṇaśakti* and *vikṣepaśakti*.

the attributes of Brahman and [1] the illusory attributes created by *māyā*, perceive the world as a unity and admixture of the real and illusory characters just as a child wearing green spectacles knows a piece of cloth as green; he identifies the knowledge of both the 'cloth' and 'green-ness', the two being obviously real to him, As we shall discuss, in detail, in another chapter of this book, the knowledge of 'difference,' [2] the ideas of 'origination', 'destruction', 'perversity' etc. that are quite common in our daily lives, are all illusory appearances caused by *māyā* and as such their 'objectivity' is included under *viṣayatā* and is a part of '*saṁsāra*' and not '*prapañca*'.

(b) *Relation between Knowledge and Knower*

Classification of the philosophical position of different Schools.

In Indian Philosophy the relation between Knowledge and Ātman has been expressed, by the advocates of the different schools broadly in three ways. Some of them, for example, the schools, of Nyāya, Rāmānuja, Madhva and others upheld that Ātman is the substrate in which knowledge inheres as quality, the others, like Kumārila and Prabhākara, propagate the agency of Ātman only in relation to the act of cognition, whereas, the schools of Kāśmīraka Śaivism, Vijñanavāda Buddhism and the Śāṁkara Vedānta, however, maintain the essential identity of knowledge and Ātman. Of these three shades of opinion the two propagating the identity of knowledge and Ātman, on the one hand, and the other maintaining their difference achieved considerable prominence in the later development and history of Indian Philosophy.

Śāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta.

As we know, the philosophers of schools of Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta regarded the pure transcendental consciousness, the eternal *a-priori* foundational *cit*, as the real nature of the Puruṣa or the Ātman which they termed '*svarūpajñāna*'. Notwithstanding the empirical form of knowledge - the *vṛttijñāna* - which is produced, non-eternal and *jaḍa* they vociferously claimed that the real nature of Puruṣa or Ātman is transcendental, pure and eternal consciousness (*cit*); knowledge in its empirical form is an outcome either of a real relationship with Prakṛti, as in Sāṁkhya, or of a suprimposed or

1. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 18.
2. Ye punaḥ utpattivināśakutsitatvaṁ bhedādayo dharmāḥ pratiyante te māyikāḥ. (*Ibid*, p. 19).

ādhyāsika association with the inexplicable principle of *avidyā* as preached in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. Their unequivocal emphasis that the pure and transcendental consciousness is the real nature of Ātman led them to denounce the alternative philosophy that knowledge or consciousness is an attribute which inheres in Ātman, the substance.

The Nyāya standpoint.

The Naiyāyikas who were the first prominent exponents of the doctrine of knowledge as a quality of Self propounded, by a special type of inference known as *pariśeṣānumāna*, that knowledge which is produced through the conjoined action of Ātman, *manas*, *indriyas* and *viṣaya*, is a quality of the soul in which it inheres. By their advocacy of the character of knowledge as produced they also implied that consciousness is only an adventitious property of Ātman whose essential nature is *jaḍa* (unconscious). But the theory of the relationship between Ātman and knowledge as the one subsisting between the 'substance' and its 'attribute' was not confined only to the Naiyāyika conception and interpretation. It received a much cogent and unique status at the hands of such Vaiṣṇavite thinkers as Rāmānuja and Madhva.

Rāmānuja's theory.

Rāmānuja, in his interpretation of the nature of Self as cit, emphasized that the *citsvarūpatā* of the soul does not mean that it is of the nature of knowledge, as contended by the Sāṁkhya and the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, but that the nature of soul consists in being the knower [1] (*jñātṛtvasvarūpatā*) in whom knowledge subsists on the analogy [2] of the lightness in a lamp or brightness in a gem. The relation between the soul, the knower, and knowledge is one of inherence, the one that subsists between the substance and its quality, and the *āśraya* and *āśrayī*. Knowledge to Rāmānuja [3] is an essential and invariable attribute of *ātman*.Though both *ātman* (the soul) and knowledge are self-evident (*svayaṁprakāśa*) in the sense that they are not dependent on any other principle yet for their revelation [4] there are several points of difference

1. Jno'ta eva jña eva syamātmā jñātṛtva svarūpa eva, na jñānamātraṁ nāpi jaḍasvarūpaṁ. (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 19).
2. *Śrībhāṣya* on śūtra (2, 3, 26).
3. Vijñānameva asya sārabhūto guṇaḥ. (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 29).
4. Ajaḍatvaṁ nāma ananyādhinaprakāśatvaṁ iti.
(Varavaramuni's Bhāṣya on *Tattvatraya*, p. 9).

among them. As explained by the author of *Tattvatraya*, the soul is a *dharmin* [1] (substance), it is capable of contraction and expansion, it is self revelatory - but not other - illuminating - and atomic. Knowledge on the other hand is an attribute, it is capable of contracting expansion, it is always other-revelatory but not self-illuminating and all-pervasive in character, These points of dissimilarity between knowledge and its substrate, the ātman, indicate the reasons for which Rāmānuja and his followers refuse to acknowledge the doctrine of the total identity of Self and consciousness or the philosophy that Ātman is mere Consciousness (*jñaptimātratā*).

Apart from the characteristics of knowledge as explicted above the Rāmānujite theory of knowledge is emphatic that though knowledge is all-pervasive [2] and eternal its manifestations are always produced and destructible in as much as their revelations depend on their objects and other spatio-temporal conditions; it is, therefore, irrelevant, from the Rāmānujite standpoint, to harp on the eternality or the unitary character of *saṁvid* or *anubhūti* (experience). Another interesting contention which throws a flood of light on the character of knowledge as attributive, is the Rāmānujite philosophy that knowledge is a 'substance'.[3] Such an assertion may be construed as a glaring contradiction of their own standpoint that knowledge is an essential attribute of ātman. How can knowledge be both 'substance' and 'attribute'? The Rāmānujites resolve this contradiction by contending that because knowledge is the substrate of both 'activity' [4] and 'attribute' and also because it is not-*jaḍa* (unconscious) it is quite prudent that it should be considered a 'substance'. What, according to Rāmānuja and his followers, is actually meant by the term 'attribute' with regard to knowledge is its eternal inherence in the individual soul. The clear significance of the interpretation is to issue a warning that the *guṇatva* of knowledge should not be understood [5] in its ordinary sense but simply that, though a substance, it eternally inheres in the individual-soul.

Like Rāmānuja, the Mādhva School of Vaiṣṇavism also emphasized that knowledge is always different from the knower,

1. *Tattvatraya*, p. 29.
2. *Tattvatraya*, p. 29 to 30.
3. Kriyāguṇāṁ āśryatvāt ajaḍatvāt ca dravyaṁ bhavati. (*Tattvatraya*, p. 31).
4. *Ibid.*
5. Varavaramuni's commentary, p. 32.

The Mādhva standpoint.

the ātman, and it inheres in the ātman as quality subsists in a substance. Because it is contained in the very nature of knowledge that it should belong to a subject and reveal an object [1] it is unwise and impurdent to seek any justification for the doctrine of the identity of knowledge and self. If knowledge were identical with the 'self' then our experience would have taken the form 'I am knowledge' and not 'I know myself', in other words, 'I have knowledge'. The element of the possessive in all our judgements evidently justifies the attributive character of knowledge, the contention that knowledge subsists as a quality in the 'self' or ātman. The followers of Madhva are emphatically assertive about the eternal character of consciousness and its nature as an attribute inhering in the 'self' though to them the term 'attribute' is meaningful only in its ordinary sense and not in the special Rāmānujite sense of *dravya* eternally inhering in ātman. Besides, the Madhvites recognise another form of knowledge known as *vṛtti-jñāna* which is neither eternal nor essentially related to ātman. This form of knowledge is produced through the contact of the object, the sense-organs, the *manas* and the *sākṣin* and is, therefore, non-eternal, intermittent and unenduring. This type of knowledge belongs only to the jīvātman and not to Īśvara, whose omniscience, as Jaya Tīrtha contends, has its reason in His knowledge which is contained in His very *svarūpa* and is not obtained through any *pramāṇa*. The whole universe, therefore, is always and directly revealed to Him by virtue of His eternal knowledge forming His body.

Vallabha's middle path.

With such a divergence of opinion on the problem of the relation between knower and knowledge Vallabha seeks a via-media between the antagonistic positions of Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta, on the one hand, and the Nyāya School of Philosophy on the other.

Consciousness both the *svarūpa* and *dharma* of jīva.

In his commentary on the sūtra '*Jño-ateva*' Vallabha asserts 'that consciousness (*caitanya*) is the first attribute [2] of the jīva notwithstanding the fact, as disclosed in the various *śrutis* that speak about

1. *Nyāyāmṛta*, p. 72.
2. Guṇānnirūpayan prathamataḥ caitanyaguṇamāḥ.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 18, p. 706)

its *vijñānamaya* character, that it is of the very nature of consciousness [1] (*caitanyasvarūpa*). The doctrine that consciousness is the attribute [2] of the jīva which pervades the whole [3] body is repeatedly asserted by Vallabha and his followers. This, however, does not signify a reversal to the Nyāya position and a consequent denunciation of the Sāṁkhya philosophy of *svarūpajñāna*. As explained by Puruṣottama in his *Prakāśa*, the concept of *caitanya* as an attribute of jīva in Vallabhite philosophy has the feature of invariable relationship with jīva such that without *caitanya* (consciousness) the very existence of the jīva is impossible. This invariable relationship [4] of co-existence (*avinābhāva*) between the substance and its attribute is the real intention of the contention [5] that consciousness is the *svarūpa* of the jīva. Thus it would be neither illogical nor contradictory if we conceive of consciousness as both the *svarūpa* (essence) and the *dharma* (quality) of the jīva. According to Vallabha, as mentioned in his gloss on *Tattvadīpani-banda*,[6] both the doctrines — the one preaching that consciousness is the very essence of the jīva and the other that it is its attribute — are equally valid because there is absolutely no difference between them. The conception of illuminating consciousness as the very essence of the soul is almost the same thing as the standpoint that the individual soul is revealed by consciousness, its attribute. Just as the 'sun' and 'sunshine' or the gem and its bright rays are not different and, therefore, identical, there is an identity between consciousness as an attribute and consciousness as the essence (*svarūpa*) of the jīva. The philosophers of the Nyāya and the Sāṁkhya Schools, unable to comprehend the relation of invariableness and identity between the two positions of knowledge — as attribute and as the essence of the Self, the substance — were driven to the fallacy of recognising the validity of only one of

1. Jñaścaitanyasvarūpaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 706).
2. Jñānadharmakatve api jñānasvarūpa ityarthaḥ (*Prakāśa* on above).
3. Jīvasya hi caitanyaṁ guṇaḥ. Sa sarvaśarīravyāpi.
   (*Āṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 25).
4. Tadanantaraṁ ca svacaitanyena guṇena sakalaśarīra vyāpitvaṁ darśayati.
   (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 107).
   See also *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 3, 18).
5. *Ibid.*
6. Prakāśakaṁ taccaitanyamiti. Prakāśakaṁ tat tadrūpaṁ, tasya caitanya guṇa vā, tena tejovat bhāsate. (*T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 166).

them. The Upaniṣadic texts provide ample justification for this contention. In one of the *mantras*, the *Chāndogya* tells, "This is the witness, the hearer, the thinker..."[1] In the *Taittirīya* the *vijñanamaya* signifies — by the use of the suffix *'mayat'* — the opulence of knowledge and then as a conclusion it is emphasized that 'knowledge actualises a sacrifice meaning[2] thereby that knowledge is both the essence (*svarūpa*) and the attribute (*dharma*) of ātman.

As we shall discuss in detail in our chapter on 'The Philosophy of the Individual Soul' the jīva is an *aṁśa* (part) of Brahman who by His Will manifests in him only the *sat* and *cit* aspects and veils the attribute of Bliss (*ānanda*). The manifestation of the souls at the time of creation does not deprive them of consciousness as their essence (*svarūpa*). As mentioned earlier, the jīva in its pristine and original state, prior to creation, is of the nature of pure transcendental consciousness; it is only at the stage of the first deployment that Consciousness — though eternal — manifests itself in its attributive aspect. It is the event of the appearance of Desire in Brahman to be many that provides the first inkling of the relation between the knower and knowledge; it is at this stage that Brahman manifests Himself as the knower or the subject of His own consciousness. The mainfesation of the individual soul being a fact of creation, his consciousness may be conceived both as his very nature (*svarūpa*) and his attribute (*dharma*). However, in its subsequent deployings at the phenomenal or the empirical level, the employment of the intellectual categories sharpens the manifestation of the schema of subject-object-relation and reveals knowledge — which is then produced-always in relation to a subject or a knower.

(c) *Self-Evidence of Knowledge*

Knowledge self-evident according to Vallabha.

Like other schools of Vedānta the Vāllabha School is also an advocate of the doctrine of self-illuminacy (*svaprakāśatva*) of knowledge and Ātman and is critical of the Nyāya doctrine of other-illuminacy of knowledge because the logical consequence of this theory would be the removal of all knowledge from the surface of the earth. 'If consciousness cannot vouchsafe its own presentation what else can

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, sūtra, 2, 3, 18, p. 706.
2. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (II, V, 1)

have this prerogative?' If it be assumed that some other principle is responsible for this, the same argument would be applicable to it as well and we would meet in the end the inexorable *regressus ad infinitum*. Vallabha, therefore, acknowledged that self-illuminacy (*svaprakāśatva*) of knowledge and Ātman, and not their other-illuminacy (*para-prakāśatva*), is the real purport of the *śrutis* which they express by using the term '*jyotiḥ*' (light) for them. Consciousness or knowledge, by its very nature, is self-illuminating since it does not depend on any other principle for its illumination.

Meaning of self-illuminacy.

Vallabha, in his *Tattvārthadīpanibandha* [1] argues that the jīva is of self-illuminating nature or, in other words, its *caitanya* - attribute is its illuminating principle. That is why the jīva is expressed and represented by the word '*joytiḥ*'. This argument clearly exhibits his preference for the doctrine of *svayaṁprakāśatva* or self-illuminacy of Consciousness and Ātman. As in Rāmānuja, Vallabha also intends by *svayaṁprakāśatva* the independence of illumination or the fact that [2] it is not illumined by any other principle. It is irrelevant to think of the illumination of knowledge by another principle on the analogy of the revelation of a pot or any other worldly object by the sun.

Denial of objectivity in transcendental state of knowledge.

Here a point may be raised : What is the Vallabhite opinion about the presence of objectivity in the transcendental and pure aspect of Consciousness? Does the concept of self-illuminacy with regard to the supreme status of consciousness involve the denial of any objectivity as in the case of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta or it requires some kind of objectivity, even in that state, as a matter of logical necessity as explicated in the philosophies of Rāmānuja and Madhva? An answer to this problem may be available in our earlier dissertation of the Vallabhite exposition of the ultimate state of Brahman-Consciousness wherein we have explained that the '*Śuddhādvaita* [3] state of the Ultimate Truth or

1. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 166.
2. Nāpi kenacit prakāśyaṁ. (*T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 171).
3. Śuddhādvaitaṁ ca sphurati. Taccajñānaṁ na viṣayaviṣayibhāvena. (*Subodhinī* on śloka X, 2, 34).

Brahman transcends the schema of 'subject-object-relation'. Thus there is no question of the presence of 'objectivity' with regard to the *svayaṁprakāśatva* of this state. It is in the later deployments that objectivity sets in and may be construed as an element in the self-illuminacy of 'consciousness' or 'knowledge' in those states.

(E) THREE STATES OF PHENOMENAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Out of the five types of determinate knowledge enumerated by the Vallabhites, the first four, viz., doubt, error, right-knowledge, and memory pertain to the waking state of human consciousness, whereas, the fifth, i.e., the sleep has its operation in the two states of dream and deep-sleep. Though the existence of the three states — the waking, the dream and the deep-sleep — is acceptable to almost all the schools of Indian Philosophy, there is a marked difference of opinion among them on the question of their nature, origin and ultimate status. We, therefore, propose to undertake a discussion on these states of consciousness for bringing to light the Vallabhite stand that bears the stamp of philosophic depth and originality in its criticism of the rival standpoints.

(a) The Waking State

The nature of waking-state.

This state is an objective state wherein the objects are grasped through *buddhi-vṛttis* generated by sense-contact. The existence of a real external-world, as the object of experience known through the various *pramāṇas* is an essential condition of this state along with the real existence of the 'subject' associated with *antaḥkaraṇa*, the gross-body and the *avidyā*. In this state there are the eleven *indriyas* — the five organs of preception, the five organs of action and the manas — the five vital-breaths (*prāṇas*), the intellect (*buddhi*), the ego (*ahaṁkāra*) and the mind-stuff (*citta*). These are the instruments through which knowledge is acquired in this state by the individual-soul manifesting a clear distinction between the knower, the knowledge and the known.

Objects of waking-state are real.

Like all other Vaiṣṇavites, Vallabha emphatically asserts that the object of waking-consciousness-the external world, a creation of God, is absolutely real and there is no iota of truth in the Śaṁkarite thesis of its unreality from the ultimate standpoint. As a

discussion on the Vallabhite refutation of the Śaṁkarite philosophy of the falsity of world is to be undertaken in another chapter of this book we refrain from any further discussion on this problem.

(b) The Dream State

The nature and origin of dream.

The origin and the nature of dreams is a problem that has engaged the attention of the philosophers of almost all the schools of Indian Philosophy not only because of their fascinating and mysterious character but also because a determination of their ultimate status and character has a far-reaching importance in assessing the ultimate truth about our external world. Apart from the lucid accounts and the searching enquiries, about this subject, that are available in the various *Upaniṣads*, the author of the *Brahmasūtra* has devoted a full *adhikaraṇa* to the problem of dreams. The two questions posed by him are : (1) What is the nature of dream-creations, whether they are real or unreal, and (2) who is the author of these creations, whether Brahman (or Īśvara) or jīva? The various commentators of the *Brahmasūtras*, as such, have taken their stand by identifying their position with either of the two alternatives. Bhāskarācārya contended that the *manas*-impelled by the past good and bad deeds in association with past *vāsanas* (latent impressions) — moving through the different nerves invokes the memory of the objects perceived during the waking state. The dream-percepts are, therefore, the remembered objects of the waking state brought to memory by means of *manas*. As the psychological genesis of the dreams, in Bhāskara's opinion, is purely an affair of the individual soul they should prudently be regarded as *jīva-sṛṣṭi* (creation of jīva) and not the creation of Īśvara or Brahman. The presence of the feelings of sorrow and happiness is a pointer to the fact that dreams 'which are facts having particular characters and features' [1] and not mere nothing, like the hare's horn, are caused by the individual-soul itself and not by God.

Problems as posed in *Brahmasūtras*.

Bhāskara's theory.

In the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, which recognizes the utility and function of the impressions or *vāsanas* of the waking state in

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 5.

Śaṁkarite argument in favour of unreality of dreams.

explaining the psychological genesis of the creations of dreams, a full length discussion is undertaken for justifying the theory that the dreams have an unreal and superimposed character. Śaṁkara, in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* enunciates the principle for verifying the reality of an entity or state and argues that if dreams were real they would confirm to the spatio-temporal-causal-relation and would also be free from any possibility of future contradiction. As the dreams have displayed an utter [1] disregard for the spatio-temporal-causal-relation and are contradicted by the succeeding waking-state they are *māyā-mātra* [2] and not real at all. Śaṁkara, therefore, disparages all attempts at justifying the reality of dream-creations and tells unequivocally that 'there is not the slightest smell of reality in dream-creations'. On the other question as to who is ths author of dreams Śaṁkara on the basis of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* [3] and *Kaṭhopaniṣad* [4]-texts decides that it is really the jīva and not Brahman that causes the dreams. Since the presentation of dreams is an activity of the individual-soul, intellectual wisdom demands that the causality of dreams be attributed to the jīva alone.

Jīva is the cause of dreams.

The Rāmānujite and the Mādhva reaction to the Śaṁkarite analysis of the nature and the causality of dreams is one of total disapprobation. They not only discard the contention that the jīva is the author of dreams but also refuse to acknowledge the unreal character of dream-creations. To Rāmānuja, a proponant of the satkhyāti doctrine of illusion, the dream experiences are as real as [5] any other human knowledge with the only difference that their subsistence has continuity and existence only for the period of their appearance; there is, however, no violation of the spatio-temporal-causal-law, as Śaṁkara would contend, because the dream

Rāmānuja and Mādhva contention that Brahman is the cause of dreams.

1. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*. p. 84.
2. Tasmatmāyāmātraṁ svapnadarśanaṁ. (*Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 345)
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (4, 3, 9).
4. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (5, 8) and *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 346.
5. Svapnādijñānaṁ tu satyameva. Tattatpuruṣānubhāvyatayā tattatkālāvasānān rathādīn paramapuruṣaḥ srjatīti śrutyāvagamyate. (*Yatīndramatadīpikā*, p. 12).

panorama is created by Īśvara just in that way. It is Īśvara or Brahman who is really the cause of dreams for it is He alone who is capable of such astounding [1] and marvellous creations. The word '*māyā*', [2] according to Rāmānuja, stands for 'marvel' and 'wonder' and not for total 'unreality' as interpreted by Śaṁkara. The types of dreams that foretell [3] the future — such as the premonitory dreams — only establish the truth of the doctrine that God alone is the creator of such dreams for no human being has either the power or ingenuity to present them.

Mādhva position and the refutation of Śaṁkarite argument.

Jaya Tīrtha, the most erudite exponent and the doyan of the Mādhva School, in his *Tattvaprakāśika*, [4] discusses almost all the important points raised by Śaṁkara against the reality of dreams and contends that the reality of dreams is a conclusion which is necessary for expounding the philosophy that the dream-state is controlled by the Lord whose greatness enjoins that this state should also be controlled by Him. Though the dreams do not have any prior existence, they are actually created during sleep by the Lord and as such there is no validity in the Śaṁkarite argument that because the dreams have no time, space and cause their nature should be treated as unreal. We can understand the spatio-temporal-existence of these dreams in the space inside the throat (*kaṇṭha-deśa*), [5] the location of the jīva during the dream. Further the argument that because dreams have no instumental or material cause they are unreal in nature is also irrelevant and easily confutable. As argued by Jaya Tīrtha in his *Tattvaprakāśika* [6] and *Nyāyasudhā* [7] the dreams are not without either the material-cause or the instrumental-cause. The latent tendencies, in the mind, about objects experienced in the past provide sufficient material (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) out of which the Lord, moved by his desire, creates the objects of dream. These latent tendencies of the mind (*saṁskāras*) act as the material-cause for the creation of dreams, whereas, the Lord's desire serves as the instrumental cause. The term '*māyāmātra*' occurring in the *Brahmasūtra* simply stands for the fact that the dreams

1. Na jīvasya tathāvidhāścarya sṛṣṭirupapādyate. (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 3).
2. Māyā śabdo hi āścaryavācī (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 3)
3. *Śrībhāṣya*, on sūtra (3, 2, 6).
4. *Tattvaprakāśikā*, p. 148.
5. *Khaṇḍārtha* on *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad*, p. 2.
6. *Tattvaprakāśikā* on sūtra (3, 2, 3).
7. *Nyāyasudhā*, p. 207.

are proudced [1] out of the latent tendencies of the mind; they convey neither unreality, as preached by Śaṁkara, nor any sense of 'wonder' or 'marvel' as contemplated by Rāmānuja.

The Vallabhite approach.

With such a background of controversial opinions, Vallabha entered into the fray with an arsenal of arguments devised for establishing the unreality of dreams, on the one hand, and warranting their creation by God on the other. He is in total agreement that the dream-presentations are creations or *sṛṣṭi*, because they are not as unreal [2] as a hare's horn or a sky-flower, but he fails to aver with those, such as Rāmānuja or Madhva, who try to attribute truth and reality to dream-cognitions and their objects. In his commentary on the sūtra *'Māyāmātraṁ tu kārtsnyenānabhivyaktasvarūpatvāt'* [3] Vallabha assigns the reasons for justifying the unreality of dreams that are reminiscent of Śaṁkara's arguments in his commentary on the same *sūtra*. The term *'kārtsnyena'* or totality in the sūtra, as interpreted by Vallabha, stands for a manifestation that is relative to space, time [4] and causality; the term also includes within its comprehension, as per the interpretation of *Prakāśa*, sense-contact, operation of senses and lack of contradiction. Because the dreams lack this totality or, in other words, they present themselves to the dreamer in utter disregard of the spatio-temporal-causal-law and the conditions of sense-contact and are subsequently contradicted by waking experience there is hardly any justification for acknowledging them as real. The scriptural-texts, as interpreted by Vallabha, also never [5] refer to the reality of dreams even though they frequently talk of their creation. The dreams have thus only a real appearance; they are not real.

Vallabha's arguments in favour of unreality of dreams.

Now the question is : How are these dreams caused and who is their creator? Vallabha too like Rāmānuja and Madhva believes that

1. *Nyāyasudhā*, p. 201.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa* on sūtra (3, 2, 4).
3. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (3, 2, 3)
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 2, 3) with *Prakāśa*.
5. Ayamāśayaḥ. Śrutiḥ sṛṣṭimevāḥ, na tasya satyatvamapi. (*Ibid*)
6. Īśvarasya yā vyāmohikā śaktiḥ sā māyā prakṛte jñeyā.
(*Prakāśa* on sūtra 3, 2, 3)

God, the creator of dreams – the reason.

it is God or Brahman who is the creator of the dream-world for it is almost impossible for the jīva to create scenes for his own displeasure, pain and horror; nor can he create his own friends. It is beyond the power of the individual soul to undertake such magnificient and wondrous creations as are visible in dreams. The dreams are, therefore, created by the *vyāmohikā-śakti* or deluding power of Brahman's *māyā* which, according to the Vallabhite interpretation, is the Lord's special capacity [1] (*sāmarthyaviśeṣa*). The term '*māyā*' as we shall elaborately discuss while dealing with the conception of *māyā* in another chapter of this book, means neither any marvellous or outstanding creation, as in Rāmānuja, nor the latent *saṁskāras*, as in Madhva, but it stands for the inscrutable and the trans-logical capacity of the Lord which is beyond the human ken. It is this capacity or *māyā* which through its veiling and deluding aspects serves as the medium of all kinds of creations. Dreams are thus caused by the Lord, through his *māyā*, for the delusion of the jīva as the magician deploys all kinds of false-appearances through his magic for the delusion of his audience.

Objections refuted.

Often the opponents of the doctrine of the falsity of dreams object that on such an assumption neither any explanation of visions of gods in the dreams of men and their instructions is possible nor can there be any satisfactory interpretation of the premonitory dreams or the dreams that foretell about the future good and evil occurrences. Unless the dreams themselves are true neither can there be any validity of the instructions of gods nor any possibility of the truth of the good and evil portents. Vallabha replies this objection by contending that the validity of such dreams is maintainable even on the assumption of their *māyika* or untrue character. Very much like the state of *samādhi*, [2] the gods appear within the heart and impart their instructions; the knowledge produced therewith is, therefore, divine, non-empirical (*alaukika*) and has its cause in the illumination of the Ātman. Just as in the famous Pratardana-anecdote Indra under Divine-Possession (*bhagavadāveśa*) instructed Pratardana to worship him similarly during the dreams also

1. Siddhānte tu sāmarthyaviśeṣo māyā. (*Ibid*).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 2, 3) with *Prakāśa*.

there may be a discourse between the Deity and the dreamer; the real cause of such a discourse is not the dream but the fact of Divine Possession (*āveśa*).[1] Similarly, the premonitory dreams are also a kind of instruction or warning to the jīva; they establish beyond doubt that it is not the individual-soul but God who is the cause of such dreams.

Māyā, the instrumental and material cause of dreams.

As regards the question as to what is the material and the instrumental cause of the dreams, the Vallabhites reply that it is *māyā* which is the instrumental as well as the material cause[2] of the dream-land. The Vallabhites do not emphasize the utility of *past-saṁskāras* of the waking-state as providing their material causality for the simple reason that during the dreams one has such fantastic experience as the chopping of one's head the like of which is never known to waking-consciousness. When the jīva, as per God's Wish, having contracted its internal and external sense[3] moves through the network of innumerable nerves there is no reflection of consciousness in his *indriyas,* including *manas,* due to the contraction of consciousness; they are only his *buddhi* and *antaḥkaraṇa* that continue to obtain the reflection and illumination of consciousness with the result that the soul, on account of its mutual superimposition with the intellect and the 'ego' enjoys the pleasure and pain of the dream-state. In this state, as explained by Puruṣottama,[4] the illumination is that of Īśvara and the objects of cognition are *māyika*; the intellect is the instrument of enjoyment whereas the enjoyment is actually felt by the ego. However, when by God's Wish there is a preponderance of *tamas* during this state, the jīva state, the jīva enters into the *purītatnāḍi* (nerve) in the heart and slips into the deep-sleep-state. It is because of the presence of intellect and *ahaṁkāra* in the dream-state that one identifies himself with its happenings leading to the consequent feeling of joy and sorrow.

(c) *Deep-sleep-state*

The deep-sleep-state or the *suṣupti* is the seat of repose of the individual-soul tired due to its experience in the dream and the waking

1. *Prakāśa* on sūtra (3, 2, 3).
2. Bhagavata eva tatra kartṛtvāt māyāyāśca kāraṇatvāt tasyā eva ca upādānatvāt. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 9)
3. *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 4, 16)
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 44, and *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 4, 16).

Nature of *suṣupti* and the process of its attainment.

states. When on account of the will of the Lord, there is the preponderance of the *tamas-attribute*, the jīva in association with [1] all its internal and external instruments (*indriyas*) enters the *purītat-nāḍi* at the mouth of the heart and attains the state of *suṣupti*.

We have a vivid description of this state in the *Bṛhadāraṇya-kopaniṣad* where it is declared that it is a state free from all desires and grief, without any knowledge of the other. "As a hawk or a falcon flying in the sky becomes tired, and stretching its wings, is bound for its nest, so does this being run for this state, where falling asleep, he craves and sees no dream." [2] This mantra and others hammer on the point that the *suṣupti* is a state of perfect tranquility — this is why it is termed as *saṁprasāda* [3] — without any knowledge of distinction or difference. It is a desireless state providing [4] for full contentment and the bliss of the Ātman though the manifestation of Bliss is veiled by the sheath of ignorance. Though this state is characterised by the absence of the knowledge of the other yet it would be a mistake to equate it either with the state of emancipation or with the state of the *Bhūmā*. [5] As we shall discuss in the succeeding chapters of this book, the *Bhūmā* is a state of omnipresent and all-pervading Consciousness which is altogether absent during the state of *suṣupti*.

Suṣupti a state of dissolution in Brahman.

In one of the mantras of the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, this ultimate state of sleep is described [6] as one of dissolution into the Supreme Truth. According to Vallabha, as explained in *Aṇubhāṣya*, the word '*svapiti*' in this mantra is not used as a verb but stands for the state [7] of the individual-soul when it is temporarily in association with the Nirguṇa-Brahman. Daily the soul, during the deep-sleep, associates itself with the Supreme Truth and then having gained the required

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 44.
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (4, 3, 19).
3. *Ibid*, mantra (4, 3, 15).
4. Samprasadaḥ suṣuptiḥ (*Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa*, p. 379).
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (6, 8, 1).
7. Svapitīti na kriyāpadaṁ kiñtu jīvasyanāma. Tadaīva svapitināmatvaṁ yadā satā sampadyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 145 with *Prakāśa*)

strength and other capacities comes back to its waking consciousness. Why the soul after its embrace with Brahman is not liberated is explained by Vallabha by referring to the presence of *vāsanās* [1] (latent desires and *saṁskāras*) in this state. Because the *vāsanas* of the bondaged souls are not completely destroyed, they, in accordance with the Wish of the Lord, serve as the medium and the instrumental-cause for the jīva's return to the waking-mundane-consciousness again.

Regarding this interpretation of the dissolution of jīva in *suṣupti* an important doubt has been raised. Does the jīva enter into its own ulterior state or it enters into Brahman? the Vallabhite reply favours the later alternative. According to Vallabha, the jīva's dissolution, during *suṣupti*, is not in its own higher and superior state but in the Nirguṇa-Brahman [2] in whose embrace it receives the intimations of His Bliss, a state of total oblivion without any consciousness of the other. Yet there is not a full-fledged identity with the Lord for the jiva still retains, in this state, its jīvahood. As the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* describes, "His form beyond desires, free from evils, and fearless. As a man fully embraced by his beloved wife, does not know anything at all, either external or internal, so does this being embraced by the Prajñā (Supreme Self), not know anything at all, either external or internal. That is his form of Total Satiety, Self-Satiety, Desireless-ness and Freedom from grief." [3] The *Prajñā*, in this mantra, as per Vallabha's interpretation, is an aspect of Brahman — not an aspect of the Self — like the other three forms, viz., the Vaiśvānara, the Taijasa and the Turīya of the *Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad*. The 'embrace' mentioned here reveals without doubt, that during the *suṣupti* the jīva is in association with Brahman and enjoys a portion of his *ānanda*, a fact which is established by the posterior memory about the deep-sleep-state, when a man says, "I have slept happily and have not seen anything." [4]

Two kinds of *suṣupti*.

It is necessary to mention here that Vallabha, in his explanation of this state, recognises [5] two kinds of *suṣuptis*. In the first state the jīva enters the

1. Vāsanāśeṣāt. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 145)
2. *Prakāśa*, p. 145.
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (IV, 3, 21).
4. *Prakāśa*, p. 464.
5. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 2, 7).

purītat-nerve of the heart; in the second, it enters and rests in the *daharākāśa* within the heart which is the seat of Brahman. In both these forms of the deep-sleep there is a total absence and denial of pain and sorrow. Yet when the Lord so wishes He by His *kriyāśakti* [1] (power of action) attracts the soul towards His own abode within the heart, locks him into embrace, and then, as per His own Wish, returns him to the waking consciousness. The second form of the *suṣupti* is thus an inner and deeper state than the former; in this, there is an abundance of delight and not only absence of pain. This should, however, not mislead us into false belief that the *purītat* and the Paramātman, as the abodes of the *suṣupti,* are non-related. To Vallabha they form part of the one and single process. Brahman is the real abode of the jīva's migration after the dream-state; the nerves and the *purītat* are its doors.

This description of the soul's deep-sleep and its subsequent awakening has led to a problem. Does the jīva awaken directly and immediately after its separation from Brahman's embrace or it enters first into the heart and then awakens afterwards? Vallabha, following the *Brahmasūtra*, prefers the first alternative and argues that because the state of embrace is one of intense oblivion without any knowledge [2] whatsoever, the very idea of the jīva's movement towards the heart is irrelevant. It is therefore, prudent to recognize the truth of the fact that the soul awakens directly and, being dissociated from Brahman, without any necessary movement towards the heart or the *purītat* nerve. Though the jīva which has not entered the inner *daharākāśa* inside the heart and has remained in the *purītat* also awakens therein (i.e., in the *purītat*) yet when it has entered the *daharākāśa* to be locked in the Lord's embrance, the awakening is instantly and directly there without necessitating the process of its going back to the juncture of the heart and the nerves.

(F) MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE (*PRAMĀṆA*)

The meaning of *pramāṇa*.

While discussing the nature of right knowledge or *niścaya*, in the foregoing pages, we have observed that the Vallabhites identify it with *pramā* which, according to them, is a valid or correct

1. Tatrāpyācchādane gāḍasupto jñānarahitaḥ kriyāśaktyā antarbhagavantaṁ vā praviśati. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 7).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 2, 8) with *Prakāśa*.

experience whose validity consists in the apprehension of the cognitum in exactly the same form and with the same characters as belong to the object. The means by which the various kinds of right knowledge are acquired are called, as in other systems of Indian Philosophy, *pramāṇa* or the uncommon-cause (*asādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*) which through its operation results in the fruition of *pramā* or right knowledge. Because in the etymological interpretation of the word '*pramāṇa*' the Vallabhite emphasis is more on its causative aspect, Puruṣottama defines it as the uncommon-cause whose operation leads to the production of right-cognition or *pramā*. The difference in the nature and the characters of these means or causes ultimately creates the difference in the varieties of right knowledge that are specifically related to their particular means and are very often included within the connotation of that specific *pramāṇa*; *pratyakṣa* as a *pramāṇa*, thus generates 'perceptual-cognition' whereas *anumāna* and *śabda* as *pramāṇas* lead to inferential-cognition (*anumiti-pramā*) and *śabda-pramā* respectively. The tendency in Vāllabha epistemology to disregard knowledge (*jñāna*) as an alternative meaning of *pramāṇa* as explained in the schools of Nyāya and Mādhva Vedānta bears a close similarity with the Advaitic or the Rāmānujite exposition that restricts the use of the term '*pramāṇa*' only to the uncommon-cause or the most invariable cause [1] (*sādhakatamaṁ*) of *pramā* or the right-knowledge.

The number of *pramāṇas*.

In Vallabha epistemology we have three types of *pramāṇas*, viz., *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) and *śabda* exactly on the foot-prints of Rāmānuja, Madhva and Sāṁkhya. Though in *Śrīmadbhāgavata Aitihya* is also accepted as a *pramāṇa* [2] so as to raise the total number of valid means of cognition to four, Puruṣottama prefers [3] to include it within *smṛti*, i.e., *śabda* (testimony). Notwithstanding their intense reverence for the *Bhāgavata* they restrict the number of *pramāṇas* to only three, namely, perception, inference and testimony. The reason for their acceptance of only three means of valid cognition lies in the fact that the whole gamut of *prameyas*

1. Yatīndramatadīpikā, p. 4.
2. Śrutipratyakṣamaitihyamanumānaṁ catuṣṭayaṁ. (*Bhāgavata*, śloka XI,19,17).
3. Tatra aitihyaṁ smṛtiḥ pūrvavṛttasmṛtyā nirūpaṇāt.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, śloka 7, p. 12).

as recognized in their system of philosophy can very well be cognised by any of these three *pramāṇas*. As remarked by Īśvarakṛṣṇa in his *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*, the object [1] of cognition (*premeya*) can be properly cognised only through the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) which indirectly suggests that the number of *pramāṇas* in each system of philosophy probably depends on the nature and the number of the different types of *prameyas* which that system so recognizes. This is true of the Vallabhites as well. Vallabha and his followers admitted 'perception' to account for the knowledge of direct and immediate objects of cognition, 'inference' to justify the existence of all mediate objects of cognition in phenomena and 'testimony' to establish the existence of all transcendent verities and trans-logical, transcendental principles, such as the existences of God (Brahman), His infinite attributes etc. As the following pages will reveal, the Vallabhites were successful in accounting for the existence and cognition of almost all that lies in the universe and beyond through one of these three means of valid cognition (*pramāṇas*) refuting the utility of all other *pramāṇas* recognized in the other systems of Indian Philosophy. With these remarks we pass on to the consideration of the nature and *modus-operandi* of these *pramāṇas*, in detail, as available in the important works of the Vāllabha School.

1. PERCEPTION (*PRATYAKṢA*)

(a) Nature and Characteristics of Perception

Definition of *Pratyakṣa*.

Puruṣottama, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, defines *pratyakṣa* [2] as '*indriyātmakaṁ pramāṇaṁ*' i.e., the means of cognition that involves the sense-organs. Like most other realistic schools, this definition restricts the domain of 'perception' only to the operation of sense-organs and demands the acceptance of sense-object-contact (*indriyārthasannikarṣa*) as its invariable and necessary condition. But all sense-object-contacts are not valid means of cognition; they sometimes lead to illusion. The Vallabhite theory of illusion, as we shall discuss in detail in this chapter, is caused not by normal senses but by senses that are either physically defective or are associated with defects (*doṣa*). As such the above

1. *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*, kārika IV.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37.

Vallabhite definition of *pratyakṣa* (perception) implies that in the necessary sense-object-contact the term 'sense-organs' means only such senses that are not associated [1] with defects.

Number of cognitive sense-organs is six.

The cognitive senses that lead to perceptual cognition are, as in Rāmānuja and Madhva, six in number, viz., the olfactory sense, the sense of taste, the sense of touch, the ear, the eye and *manas* and accordingly we have in Vāllabha Vedānta six varieties of perceptual cognitions, viz., the visual, the tactual, the gustatory, the auditory, the olfactory and the mental. The recognition of *manas* as an *indriya* — a common trait of almost all the Vaiṣṇavite thinkers —- is antagonistic to the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta which upholds that *manas* is not a sense-organ and its enumeration in the *Gītā* as an *indriya* is only to complete the sixth number just as when it is said that 'the *Vedas* and the *Mahābhārata* - the fifth - were taught' it simply means that the four *Vedas* and the *Mahābhārata* were taught and not that the *Mahābhārata* is one among the *Vedas*. Similarly, when the *Gītā*-text reads, '*Manaḥṣaṣṭhānīdriyāṇi*' [2] it intends to impart the knowledge that there are five *indriyas* and manas is the sixth (a different category). Such an interpretation, according to Puruṣottama, [3] is a misrepresentation of the *Gītā* where the Lord unambiguously declares. 'I am *manas* among the *indriyas*', and lays this controversy for ever at rest. Moreover, without the instrumentality of *manas*, as an *indriya*, it is difficult to explain the causality of such mental cognitions as desires, passions, pleasure, pain, attachment etc. The *manas* in Vallabhite philosophy is an intensely subtle and inner *indriya* which is not only the cause of these feelings and emotions but also assists in the operation of all the conative and the cognitive senses. Thus there are eleven senses in total — the five conative senses (*karmendriya*), the five cognitive senses (*jñānendriya*) and manas. All these eleven *indriyas* are by nature non-eternal, durable, [4] transforming, atomic in dimension and beyond the reach of senses.

Six kinds of perceptions.

Argument to prove that *manas* is an *indriya*.

Eleven sense-organs.

1. Doṣaduṣṭendriyavāraṇāya pramāṇamiti. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37).
2. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XV, 7).
3. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37.
4. *Ibid.*

Qualification of the 'object'.

Though the operation of the non-defective cognitive senses is a necessary and invariable condition for sense-object-contact and the subsequent generation of perceptual-knowledge yet this alone is insufficient. In order that there may be true perceptual cognition the datum must also be qualified to be an 'object'. Wherein consists this qualification? The Vallabhites reply that it lies in the manifested [1] form (*udbhūta*) of the datum. In view of this fundamental Vallabhite assertion that the cosmos (*prapañca*) is a real manifestation of Brahman in whom all that exists in the world and beyond subsists either in a manifested or a nascent form, the manifestation of the object is a necessary condition of its 'objectivity' (*viṣayatva*). The visual organ, i.e., the eye can perceive colour — and also the substance to which it pertains — only when there is manifested colour; the atoms or ghosts are invisible simply because their colour is unmanifested. Accordingly, all the objects of the other cognitive senses, must also be manifested in order that they may come in contact with their respective senses. The contact of the senses with their manifested objects not only cognises the attributes of those objects, such as colour, taste, smell, sound and tactuality (*sparśa*), but also their substance, actions (*karmas*), classes (*jāti*) and inherence (*samavāya*). According to Puruṣottama, the senses first cognise the quality [2] (e.g. colour) and then their related substances; it is only through perception of colour that there is the perception of the colourful (the substance to which 'colour' belongs). This position is at variance with the Nyāya contention that the senses in perception first come in contact with the substance [3] (*rūpavat*) and then with their attributes like colour etc. (rūpa) because of their inherence in their substances.

All manifested attributes and their substances are not perceptible to all the senses. The element of earth is apprehended by all the five cognitive [4] senses; water can be grasped by only four, viz., the eye, the sense of taste, the ear, and the skin; *tejas* or *agni* is a worthy object of only three, the eye, the ear and the skin; the air is cognisable only by two viz., the skin and the ear whereas the element of *ākāśa* is cognised by the ear alone. Time [5] and space are not directly cognised

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. Mishra, Umesha : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 494.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37.
5. Dikkālau tu grāhyārthaviśeṣaṇatayaiva gṛhyete na sākṣāt.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37).

by the senses; they are, however, perceived as attributes along with the various objects of cognition during the course of their perception. All feelings and emotions, pleasure and pain are the percepts of *manas* as a sense-organ. Thus each of the six senses (*indriyas*) including *manas* is instrumental in the production of the perceptual cognition of a different variety and range of objects.

Individual soul not an object of sense-perception.

The individual soul (ātman), however, is not the object of any of the above senses and its realization is beyond the gamut of perceptual cognition caused by the senses. As Vallabha asserts, "The individual soul can neither be cognised nor illumined by any of the natural (*prākṛta*) sense-organs; it can be realized only either by Yoga, the spiritual vision that is capable of experiencing the Almighty, or the pure uncontaminated *sāttvika* knowledge. As the ātman is bereft of the natural qualities like colour, taste etc., it is not an object of sense-contact and consequently of perceptual-cognition."[1]

This discussion regarding the nature and the object of the senses leads us to another important problem which relates to the manner of the operation of the senses (*vyāpāra*). By the operation of the senses the Vallabhites comprehend the way of their contact with their objects. This contact,[2] according to Puruṣottama, is of two kinds, viz., the *laukika* (ordinary) and the *alaukika* (extraordinary). There are five different forms of *laukika-pratyāsatti*[3] (ordinary contact); they are as follows.

Two types of contact- *laukika* and *alaukika*.

Five kinds of *laukika pratyakṣa*,

(1) *Saṁyoga (conjunction)* : Saṁyoga or conjunction is a relation that subsists between two substances. In their operations the various sense-organs are related to their respective substances through *vṛtti* and thus the *pratyāsatti* between a sense-organ and a substance is of the nature of *saṁyoga*. For example when the eye[4] cognises a 'jar' — the substance — its relation or contact with the jar is one of *saṁyoga*. Similarly, all other *indriyas*, viz., the ear, the sense of smell (nose), the tactile sense and the sense of taste also are in relation of contact with their respective objects.

1. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, ślokas 55 to 56 with *Prakāśa*.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 40.
3. *Ibid*.
4. Tatra cakṣuṣā dravyagrahe saṁyoga eva pratyāsattiḥ. (*Ibid*, p. 40).

(2) *Tādātmya (Identity)* : The relation between the attributes, the *jāti* (universal) and action (*karma*) of a substance with itself (i.e. the substance) are explained in Vallabhite philosophy as one of identity as against the Nyāya concept of inherence (*samavāya*). The different pairs of a *yutasiddha* do not go to establish a separate relation of inherence but simply prove that they are identical. This denunciation of inherence impelled the Vallabhites to argue that in the cognition of attributes (e.g., colour), the universal and the activity of the substance the operation of the senses is one of *tādātmya* or identity.

(3) *Saṁyukta-tādātmya (conjunction and identity)* : The contact of the *indriyas* (senses) with the attributes, the universal (*jīti*) and the action of their respective objects is possible only when their substances have already entered into conjunction with these sense-organs. The operation of senses in these cases is, therefore, one of both 'conjunction and identity'. One may reasonably acknowledge them to be belonging to both the varieties of *pratyāsatti*, viz., '*saṁyoga*' and '*saṁyukta-tādātmya*'.

(4) *Svarūpa (By nature)* : There are certain cases in which the nature (*svarūpa*) of the cognitum itself is instrumental (*dvāraṁ*) in its perception. An analysis of the perception of 'sound' by the auditory-sense would reveal that the contact of sound with the skin of the ear-drum is always through air which carries the sound; the perception of sound is rendered possible only because the very nature of 'sound' permits its transmission through 'air'. The operation of the auditory-sense in this case is, therefore, called *svarūpa-pratyāsatti*. Another illustration of this kind of contact may be found in the operation of *manas*, as an *indriya*, during the course of its perception of 'knowledge' (*jñāna*) and the feelings of pleasure and pain. As the subjective modes (*vṛttis*) of knowledge and feelings are the attributes of *manas* their mental perception is occasioned simply by means of the specific nature (*svarūpa*) of the *vṛttis* ; it is also a case of *svarūpa-pratyāsatti*.

(5) *Saṁyuktaviśeṣaṇatādātmya* : This variety of sense-operation is available in cases of '*tirobhāva*' [1] or concealment. When a particular form of manifested existent (e.g., a jar) merges in its inherent or the material-cause (e.g., the earth) there is then the concealment or *tirobhāva*

1. Tirobhāvastu indriyasaṁyuktaviśeṣaṇatayā gṛhyate.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 40).

of its form as 'jug'. When, however, one perceives the material-cause—the earth — he also perceives the concealment of the 'jug'. Here the conjunction of visual-sense (the eye) with earth is qualified with the idea of concealment and as qualification or attribution is a case of identity, the Vallabhites maintain that this specific form of the operation of the visual-sense is a different kind of *pratyāsatti* nomenclatured by them as '*Saṁyuktaviśeṣaṇatādātmya*'.

Kinds of *Alaukika-pratyakṣa.*

Apart from the above-mentioned forms of *laukika-pratyāsatti* there are certain cases of perceptual-knowledge in which we have extraordinary operation (alaukika) of the senses. These extraordinary sense-operations are of three kinds,[1] viz., *sāmānya*, *yogaja* and *māyā*. They have been explained by Puruṣottama in the following way.

(a) *Sāmānya* : The *sāmānya* type of extraordinary — contact is there where we have the perception of the 'individual' (*vyakti*) as qualified by its universal (*jāti*). It is a matter of common experience that the knowledge of the universal or the class (*jāti*) is always related to and is useful for the knowledge of the individual, e.g., the jar-ness (*ghaṭatva*) to the jar (*ghaṭa*). Thus the perception of the universal (the jar-ness) along with the cognition of the individual (jar) when it comes in contact with the sense-organ (e.g., the eye), is known as the *sāmānya* variety of extraordinary perceptual-cognition very much like the *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-pratyāsatti* of the Naiyāyikas.

(b) *Yogaja* : This extraordinary perception is considered to be the special power of the *yogins* and the *bhaktas* (devotees). By dint of this power, the *yogins* have the capacity to perceive, directly and immediately, all events and objects belonging to the past, future and trans-empirical regions with their respective senses. The *yogin*'s sense-operation, in such cases, is known as the *yogaja-pratyakṣa*. The Vallabhites, however, also include the cases of concentration and samādhi within this form of *pratyāsatti*. The recognition of *yogaja* as a kind of extraordinary-perception is apparently on the footprints of Nyāya.

(c) *Māyā* : This form of extraordinary-perception is caused by *māyā* which, according to Vallabhite philosophy, is the main principle

1. Alaukikastridhā, sāmānyayogajamāyābhedāt.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 40).

responsible for the generation of the cognition of non-existent objects in their respective existent substrata. In the case of the illusion of conch-shell appearing as silver, the non-existent silver is projected by *māyā* in the conch-shell, the real substratum, and one has the false knowledge of conch-shell as 'silver'. The contact of the visual-sense, i.e., the eye, with the false and unreal 'silver' - the handiwork of *māyā*- is thus an extraordinary type of *pratyāsatti*. Puruṣottama, however, has a dig at the Naiyāyikas when he asserts that the Naiyāyika's explanation of *jñānalakṣaṇapratyāsatti* as an extraordinary variety of contact is a fallacy; it is eloquently an illustration of their misunderstanding. To him *yogaja* and *māyā* are acceptable on scriptural [1] authority whereas *sāmānya* is a matter of ordinary human experience.

The Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta psychology of *vṛtti*.

Every kind of perceptual cognition demanding the instrumentality of the sense-organs and their contact with their objects is necessarily a determinate knowledge (*savikalpaka-jñāna*) in whose operation the mediacy of *vṛttis* has been forcefully emphasized both by the schools of Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta. After looking at an outward object when we close our eyes there appears an after-image of the form of that object within our eyes. This form or after-image can not belong to the outward object because, as the eyes are closed, the form can not leave its substrate and be present within the eyes. Naturally, the form must belong to some inner and subjective principle. What principle or substance is it to which it belongs? The Sāṁkhya, philosophers imagine a separate *tattva*, a product of the *sāttvika-ahaṁkāra*, for this purpose which they call *vṛtti*. The Śāṁkara School of Vedānta also acquiesced in the Sāṁkhya contention differing only in the explanation of the nature of *vṛtti*. To the Advaitins *vṛtti* is not a product of *ahaṁkāra* but only a modification of *antaḥkaraṇa* which on account of the preponderance of the *sattva* attribute is in a position to emerge out of the gates of sense-organs and transform itself into the form of the object and thus establish a relation between the *buddhi* (intellect) and the object. The process of the emergence and the travelling of the *vṛtti* to its object is recognised both by the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita School of Vedānta notwithstanding the Nyāya objection that such a philosophy of *vṛtti* is both fantastic and illogical;

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 40.

they reply this objection by contending that the 'travelling [1] of the *vṛtti* is proved by the facts of perception and we have to admit it'.

The Nyāya denunciation of the utility and function of *vrtti*.

The Naiyāyikas, on the other hand, discarded the concept of the operation and the utility of *vṛtti* in the production of perceptual cognition. To them, 'when the visual sense-organ comes in contact with the rūpa (colour) or the *rūpamat*, either by sending its own rays to the object of perception, or by coming in contact with the object's rays received by the organ in its own place, the sense-organs being *prāpyakārī*, the impression of the object is carried through the sense-organ to the *manas*, which, in its turn, comes in fresh contact with the Ātman' [2] and thus there is the perception of the object. When the sense-object-contact can be established by rays of the eye or of the visual object what is the fun in imagining *vṛtti*? The Naiyāyikas, therefore, assert that the Sāṁkhya and Vedānta principle of *vṛtti* is quite redundant.

The Vallabhite psychology of *vṛtti*.

In the face of this divergence of opinion Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja asserts that as the perception of the after-image within the eyes is a common human experience, which cannot be set aside, the existence of *vṛtti* is irrefutable. We may disagree with the Sāṁkhya or the Vedānta interpretation of the nature and the cause of *vṛtti* but it would be illogical to assert that there is no *vṛtti* at all. The existence and the fact of *vṛtti* is absolutely undeniable. The *vṛtti*, according to Puruṣottama, is neither a separate *āhaṁkārika-tattva*, as preached by Sāṁkhya, nor a modification of *antaḥkaraṇa*, as advocated by Śāṁkara Vedānta, but a state of *buddhi* (intellect) in which there is a preponderance of the *sattva-guṇa* as a result of the disturbance [3] created by *Kāla*. But if *vṛtti* is only a state of *buddhi* how can it be supposed to travel outside and how can it acquire the form of the after-image? This difficulty is solved by Puruṣottama by contending that the emergence of *vṛtti* and its pervasion over the external-object as

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 342.
2. Mishra, Umesha. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 493.
3. Sā vṛttirbuddhernatattvāntaraṁ nāpyantaḥkaraṇapariṇāmāntaraṁ kiñtu buddhitattvasya kālakṣubdhasattvādiguṇakṛto avasthāviśeṣaḥ.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 42).

explained by the Advaitins is not always necessary for the proper manifestation of the object. What happens in a visual perception is that "the rays of the object penetrate the eye-balls and produce there certain impressions which remain even when the rays are cut off by the shutting of the eye."[1] Due to the activity and the deceptive[2] power of the *rajas*-attribute, the form of the external object is reflected, like the reflection of the face in a mirror, within the eye-ball and thus one has therein the experience of a form which in reality is only *māyika* in character, The presence and mediacy of vṛtti — a state and mode of *buddhi* — in the operation of perceptual cognition is not the speciality of ocular perception only but is a necessary condition[3] of all other kinds of perceptual cognitions such as auditory, gustatory, tactual etc. The Vāllabha epistemology is emphatic that the activities of all the sense-organs, whether conative or cognitive, are necessarily dependent[4] on *buddhi* for their motivation; the *buddhi*, however, actualises this motivation through its own modes i.e., the *vṛttis* and results in the various forms of sensual determinate knowledge. Not only is the presence of *vṛtti* indispensable in determinate perception, it is a must in indeterminate perception as well; the only difference consists in the fact that whereas in the indeterminate perception the *vṛtti* is localised in the location[5] of the sense-organ, in the determinate perception it obtains the assistance and support of the sense-organs in making it full-blown determinate-perception. To Vallabhites, the assistance and causality of the sense-organs is absolutely essential[6] in the formation of a determinate knowledge. All forms of determinate knowledge, viz., doubt, illusion, right-knowledge, memory and sleep are mediated by some kind of *vṛtti* whose operation in each case has a speciality of its own.

The utility and function of *vṛtti* in perception.

It is often argued that since we have no direct experience of *vṛttis* how can we be certain about their existence? Puruṣottama, however, replies this

Proof of the existence of *vṛttis*.

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 343.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 43.
3. Evamindriyāntarepi vṛttijñātavyā. (*Presthānaratnākara*, p. 42).
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 43.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Tadendriyānugrahe savikalpakam ananugrahe tu na. (*Ibid*, p. 43).

objection by contending that though there is no direct and immediate experience of *vṛttis* their existence is inferred [1] on the basis of *saṁskāras* (latent tendencies) which are only the intensely subtle and latent forms of knowledge already produced. When a posterior *vṛtti* or mode of intellect destroys the prior *vṛtti*, it is never totally destroyed; it sustains in the form of *saṁskāras*. These latent tendencies have a wide influence in determining the other forms of determinate knowledge. The postulation of the existence of *vṛttis* is thus ascertained and concluded by inference and not by direct experience as the opponent appears to demand; the doctrine of the *vṛttis* has also the sanction of such an important [2] scripture as the *Bhāgavata*.

(b) The Process of Perception

Vallabhite explanation of the process.

Puruṣottama while explaining the process of perception both in his *Prasthānaratnākara* and in his *Prakāśa*,[3] a commentary on *Aṇubhāṣya*, asserts on the authority of the *Bhagavadgītā* that every human activity is caused by five essential and invariable conditions, viz., the body, the soul, the internal and external instruments, the motive forces, i.e., the five vital-breaths, and the divine elements, viz., *kālā*, *karma*, the Lord's desire, the *antaryāmin* etc. Due to the Lord's Wish, the *antaryāmin*, present within the individual, in association with *kāla* and his individual past actions (*karmas*) motivates the *antaḥkaraṇa*. This motivation has a four-fold aspect; the *ahaṁkāra* creates the idea and feeling of 'ego'; the *buddhi* motivates the cognitive senses; the *manas*, being the leader of both the cognitive and conative senses, comes in contact with the *indriyas* and then propels them towards their respective objects; the fourth, i.e., the *citta* has its function only during deep-sleep (*suṣupti*) when it identifies itself with the ātman. As the Vallabhite theology believes, the *ahaṁkāra*, the *buddhi* and the *manas* are respectively superintended, in the course of their performance, by three controlling deities, viz., Rudra, Brahmā and Chandra.

This process is, however, common to all kinds of cognitive and conative activities. Every cognitive process of perception thus presuppo-

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, śloka (V, 11, 9).
3. *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 4, 66).

ses it as a foundational condition and then makes further advancement. The motivation of the cognitive senses by the *manas* towards their respective objects first produces the indeterminate perception, in which there is only sense-object-contact and then we have the determinate knowledge of things supported by the *vṛttis*. The process of sense-object-contact in case of ocular-contact is, however, different from the process of contact in cases of other senses. In ocular-contact the rays of the eyes travel and conjugate with their objects subsequent to which there is the *māyika* reflection of the object in the eye as an *indriya*. But in cases of the contacts of the other sense-organs, that are devoid of rays, it is the *manas* which in association with the senses contacts with their objects and we have thus, firstly, their indeterminate perception and then the full-fledged determinate cognition. But this process of knowledge remains incomplete till it is invested with the idea of the ego so that the individual-soul realizes that the knowlege so created is its own. This sense of 'ego' is created by the superimposition of the *antaḥkaraṇa* on the individual-soul due to which it is assured that the cognition or activity really belongs to him. This superimposition of the *antaḥkaraṇa* creates a chain of subsequent superimpositions leading to the false belief of the identification of the jīva with the body (*dehādhyāsa*) and the *indriyas* (*indriyādhyāsa*).

Refutation of the Nyāya explanation of the process of perception.

This description of the Vallabhite process of perception may disclose their disagreement with the Nyāya account of the perceptual process in which it is supposed that the ātman comes in contact with the *manas*, the *manas* with the *indriyas*, the *indriyas* with their objects and thus ultimately the knowledge of the object is produced in the individual soul. The Vallabhite objection to this explanation rests on the argument that since ātman is ubiquitous (*vibhu*) in Nyāya it is illogical to conceive of it as a subject in sense-object-contact; moreover, the Nyāya theory is contrary to the verdict of the *śrutis*.

(c) Indeterminate and Determinate Perceptions

In their epistemological analysis and explanation of the fact of perception and the process of perceptual cognition most of the Indian orthodox schools are in agreement that it can reasonably be construed as consisting of two stages, occurring in succession, termed as the

indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*) and the determinate (*savikalpa*) forms or aspects of perception. Yet they have upheld divergent and, at times, contrary views on the question of the exact nature of indeterminate perception, the proofs of its existence and the manner of its passage into full-blown determinate cognition. The Naiyāyikas who defined 'determinate perception' as a knowledge illumining the subject, the object and the total range of predications of an object (e.g., the knowledge, 'This is black', 'This is a Brāhmaṇa') [1] averred that there is a stage prior to this fully manifested stage of predication which by nature is devoid of any perdication expressed as subject-attribute-relation [2] (*viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-saṁbandha*) and this stage or form of perceptual cognition is the cause of the posterior determinate perception. Notwithstanding their acclamation that the indeterminate aspect of perception is without any determination the Nyāya philosophers seldom had in mind a completely distinction-less homogeneity of content without any particularisation. Vācaspati held that the *nirvikalpaka* stage involves the illumination of colour, form as well as the universal (*jāti*) of the object; only it does not reveal the subject-predicate-relation which, however, is the function of the determinate stage of perception. Śrīdhara advanced a step further and emphasized that during the *nirvikalpaka* stage there is not only the perception of the universal but the perception of difference as well. This is why the Nyāya logicians assert that by declaring indeterminate knowledge as *caturthī-viṣayatā* [3] (i.e., objectivity which displays that it is free from objectivity as 'subject', 'predicate' and 'contact') their intention is only to communicate that the *nirvikalpaka* perception simply lacks in the knowledge of the 'qualified'— not that of 'quality'. Thus the cognition expressed by the judgement, 'This is black', — which is *savikalpaka*– is preceded and caused by the attributive knowledge of the 'this' which is termed '*nirvikalpaka*' by the Naiyāyikas. The later Navya-Naiyāyikas, following Gaṅgeśa, were quite clear that *nirvikalpa* knowledge means the knowledge of mere predication without any association with the subject.

The Nyāya standpoint.

1. *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 80.
2. Tatra niṣprakārakaṁ jñānaṁ nirvikalpakaṁ.
   (*Tarkasaṁgraha* with *Dīpikā*, p. 78 to 79).
3. *Nyāyabodhinī* and *Dīpikā* on *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 79.

But the existence of such a knowledge can be established only through inference and not on the basis of perception or direct-experience. The indeterminate perception is thus a logical [1] stage in the development of perceptual cognition and not a psychological one. Thus, "indeterminate perception is that in which the thing is taken at the very first moment of perception in which it appears without any association with name. Determinate perception takes place after the indeterminate stage is just passed; it reveals things as being endowed with all characteristics and qualities and name just as we find in all our concrete experience. Indeterminate perception reveals the things with their characteristics and universals but at this stage there being no association of name it is more or less indistinct. When once their names are connected with the percept it forms the determinate perception of thing called *savikalpa-pratyakṣa.*" [2]

Kumārila's view.

According to Kumārila, cognition in the *nirvikalpa* stage is only a simple perception, called ālocana, without any consciousness of either the genus or the differentia of the object. What is presented at this stage is only the object without any illumination of its characteristics, particular as well as the generic and the universal. The indeterminate perception, according to Kumārila, is very much like the cognitions possessed by a new-born infant. But this does not imply a total rejection of the knowledge of genus and differentia in this state. What is meant by Kumārila is only to assert that the non-manifestation of the genus and differentia in this state is only because other things are not presented to consciousness through memory so that it may be fully comprehended by way of comparison and contrast. What constitutes the difference between the indeterminate and determinate forms of perception, according to Bhaṭṭa-Mīmāṁsā, is this : Whereas in determinate perception the memory of the objects — not that of the percepts — creeps in, the indeterminate form is free from the influence of memory. Kumārila too, very much like the Naiyāyikas, acquiesces in the causality of indeterminate cognition producing the determinate one.

The Prabhākara School of Mīmāṁsā, however, holds a different standpoint on this problem. To Prabhākara, who is a vocal exponent

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol I, p. 339.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 334.

Prabhākara's contention.

of the doctrine of consciousness as *triputi-pratyakṣa*, consciousness in its flash illumines both the subject and its predicates without any revelation of their difference or a consequent sense of priority or posteriority. So, as Prabhākara admonishes, it is redundant and foolish to bifurcate the single unit of perceptual act into indeterminate and determinate.

The Advaitic standpoint.

The distinction between the indeterminate and determinate forms of cognition is accepted in Advaita epistemology also. The author of *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* explains that "*savikalpa* is cognition apprehending relatedness of the subject with its predicates, e.g., 'I know the jar'. The *nirvikalpaka* is, however, the cognition that fails to apprehend the relation between the subject and its predicate, e.g., the knowledge expressed in the judgements 'He is Devadatta' or 'Thou art that'."[1] Though here the two stages of perception are recognized yet the account of the *nirvikalpaka* as given by Dharmarājādhvarendra completely does away with the utility of sense-object-contact as a necessary condition of perception. For him perception is only an identification of the *pramāṇa-caitanya* with the *viṣaya-caitanya* (object-consciousness) brought about by the *vṛttis* of *antaḥkaraṇa*. Thus the two stages of knowledge only represent the gradual unfolding and identity of the object-consciousness with the subject-consciousness (*pramātṛ-caitanya*) and the *pramāṇa-caitanya*.

Rāmānujite opinion.

When we come to Rāmānuja we find in his Viśiṣṭādvaita system an almost total denunciation of any possibility of indeterminate knowledge because knowledge by nature is always determinate. Yet he and his followers have agreed to the classification of perception as indeterminate and determinate by endeavouring a novel and pluralistic conception of the *nirvikalpaka*. By *nirvikalpaka* cognition in this system is meant the first knowledge of the object involving determinations and characters of various kinds, e.g., colour, form, universal, etc., whereas in the *savikalpaka* the same characters are perceived again; the "characters discerned before are revised in the mind, and by comparison the specific characters are properly assimilated."[2] The later exponents

1. *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, p. 41.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol III, p. 166.

of this school, e.g., Veṅkaṭanātha argued that there can be no possibility of the manifestation of characters in their fullness in the later stage of determinate perception unless and until they are supposed to be grasped in the indeterminate stage. They, however, advanced a step further when they explained the *savikalpaka* as a determinate perception involving spatio-temporal reference to the past as against the *nirvkalpa-pratyakṣa* in which, though there is a revelation of the specific character of the object, there is no direct reference to its past associations. Rāmānuja and his followers were also highly critical of the Nyāya thesis that the *nirvikalpa* stage is the cause of the posterior *savikalpa* cognition.

Mādhva rejection of indeterminate-perception.

The downright pluralism of the Mādhva School and their uncompromising epistemological realism recognising the truth that knowledge is always determinate pooh-poohed the Rāmānujite vacillation in maintaining on the one hand that knowledge is always determinate and on the other recognizing the existence of indeterminate perception; to them, this is really illogical. The Madhvites declared that there is only one kind of perception-the determinate one-and there is no such stage in the course of perceptual cognition that may be called 'indeterminate'.

The Vallabhite theory.

With such a wide range of diversity in the standpoints of the members of the galaxy of Indian Thought on this particular problem the Vallabhites have moved with caution in taking a stand — which they seek to justify both on the touchstones of logic and scriptural testimony — that is in conformity with their ultimate philosophical position. Puruṣottama, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, classifies perception as indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*) and determinate (*savikalpa*). As we have mentioned earlier, the two *guṇas*, viz., the *sattva* and the *rajas* play a great part in determining the character of 'perception'; the *sattva* attribute leads to knowledge which is unitary, harmonious, monistic and valid, whereas, the preponderance of *rajas* leads to variegated, different and differentiating knowledge. Puruṣottama, therefore, declares that determinate knowledge is always *rājasika*.[1] Prior to this determinate

1. Tatra rājasamjñānam savikalpakam. Tataḥ pūrvam cendriyeṣu sāttvikam utpadyate nirvikalpakam. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 2).

cognition there is always a stage in which the cognition has the preponderance of the *sattva-guṇa*, so much so that there is only the contentless consciousness of the 'being' of 'existence' or [1] the object; the 'percept' in this stage is illumined only as an 'existent' and nothing else. This stage of perception which always precedes the subsequent perception of 'contents' and 'characters' is termed '*nirvikalpaka*' by Puruṣottama. The *vṛttis* in the waking life being *sāttvika* in character, the senses when they come in contact with their respective objects have only their *sāttvika* and integral grasp — a cognition that is merely the apprehension of 'being' bereft of any association with *vikalpa* [2] or determinations with all their differences. As soon as there is the preponderance of the *rajas* element, the *buddhi* in association grasps the determinations,[3] the characters and the class of the percept and its name and form. This is the stage of *savikalpaka-pratyakṣa* or determinate perception.

Vallabhite interpretation of Indeterminate Perception.

This account of the two stages and forms of cognition may bring home to us the speciality and the unique character of the Vallabhite interpretation of indeterminate perception. Though they agree with Nyāya and other realist schools in their acceptance of sense-contact as a necessary condition of both the indeterminate and the determinate forms of perception yet they totally reject the possibility of consciousness of any kind of determination or character, howsoever covert it may be, during the indeterminate stage. The *nirvikalpa* state to them is a unitary and integral consciousness of the bare existence of the object. It is the preponderance of the *rajas* element that transfigures the homogeneous integral and sāttvika form of knowledge into a knowledge of the *vikalpas* of that object. It is, therefore, irrelevant for the Naiyāyikas to assert that the indeterminate stage of perception is the cause of the subsequent [4] determinate stage. There is, according

Vallabhite difference from Nyāya and other realists.

1. Tacca sanmātrāvagāhī ekavidhaṁ eva. (*Ibid*, p. 3).
2. Tasya sanmātrāvagāhitvaṁ ca vastumātraviṣayakatvāt vikalpanyakkāre satyeva vastu paryavasānāt. (*Ibid*, p. 3).
3. *Ibid*, p. 3.
4. Etasya savikalpakāt pūrvabhāvepi na tatkāraṇatvaṁ pramāṇābhāvāt. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 3).

to Vallabhites, absolutely no relation of causality between these states as misconceived by the Nyāya philosophers. The Vallabhites who had no qualms in denouncing the existence of any kind of substance — attribute relation in the 'indeterminate stage' of knowledge may be misunderstood to be acknowledging the Advaitic position which too claims that the *nirvikalpaka*-stage is devoid of all *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya-saṁsarga*. Yet this would be a grave misunderstanding. The Vallabhites emphasie that *nirvikalpa* is the first stage of cognition in which the operation of the senses and their contact with their respective objects is essential; the Advaitins, however, deny this and interpret this form of perception as if it were a variety of *Śabda-pramāṇa* (verbal knowledge). The Vallabhite emphasis on the possibility of integral and unitary character of knowledge and its claim to validity, which is otherwise shaken in the subsequent determinate form, is an interesting and unique development flying at a tangent to the principal philosophical position of other Vaiṣṇavite schools.

Difference with the Advaitins.

(d) The Doctrine of Negation (abhāva)

The problem of Negation or Abhāva is one of the few interesting topics of discourse on which the masters of the various schools of Indian Philosophy have racked their brains. Their discussions have invariably centred round two basic problems : firstly, whether 'negation' has a claim to any separate existence or category and, secondly, whether its cognition and experience can be acquired by the productive means of 'perception' (*pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*) without involving the operation of a different *modus-operandi* (*pramāṇa*). The philosophers of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system with their intrinsic faith in the efficacy of experience in establishing the reality of its object argued that because in the judgement, 'There is no jug here', one has the experience of the absence of the jug, this 'absence' or 'negation' should be acknowledged as a separate category of existence. It is the force of this argument that led them to add '*abhāva*' [1] to their old list of six *padārthas* or categories. The question whether perception is a sufficient and valid means for cognising 'negation' is replied by them in the affirmative.

Nyāya theory – negation a separate category cognised by perception.

1. Mishra, Umesha. : *The Conception of Matter*, p. 39n.

They contend that the cognition of the ground and the cognition of the negation of the 'jug' in the perception 'the ground is without the jug' is one unitary whole of apprehension where the perception of the ground — in association with the usual and necessary condition, e.g., light etc. — involves the non-apprehension of the jug. Notwithstanding their acceptance of 'negation' as a separate category, the Naiyāyikas uphold that the single act of the visual perception of the locus, through the contact of the eye with the 'ground', results in the apprehension of the 'negation' of the jug on the analogy of the perception of the 'quality' along with the perception of the 'substance' which alone is exposed to the necessary sense-object-contact. Thus for the apprehension of negation or non-existence, perception (*pratyakṣa*) is the only means of cognition; it needs no separate *pramāṇa* for its cognition.

Mīmāṁsā and Advaita Vedānta position.

The philosophers of the schools of Mīmāṁsā and Advaita Vedānta arguing in favour of the validity of the contention that negation is a separate category disagreed with the Nyāya logic that it is cognisable through 'perception'. To them 'negation' which by nature is negative and so is precluded from being an object of sense-contact since this contact is restricted to the domain of positive existents only-can never be an object of perception. Strict epistemological analysis and force of logic, therefore, demands that a separate *modus-operandi* of apprehension or *pramāṇa* should be acknowledged for the cognition of non-existence or *abhāva*. Both in Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta this *pramāṇa* is named '*Anupalabdhi*' The argument that the perception of the locus generates the perception of the negation on the analogy of substance-attribute-relation is illogical because 'negation' (*abhāva*) being a negative category is always different in its import from 'attribute' (*viśeṣaṇa*) which is always positive. As argued by Pārthasārathīmiśra, all existinces are of two kinds viz., positive and negative; where it is positive it is cognisable through perception and where it is 'negative' it is apprehensible through *anupalabdhi* alone. Thus, the cognition of the ground, as locus, is an act of perception whereas the apprehension of the non-existence of the 'jug' at the same place is an outcome of the operation of *anupalabdhi*. What is important in such cases of

1. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 120.

apprehension of non-existence that are cognised [1] by *anupalabdhi* is not only the non-perception of the object that would have been perceived had it existed but also the certainty about the presence of all those conditions which would have produced [1] the knowledge of the object had it not been absent at the spot, i.e., the locus of *abhāva*. Thus it is only in a lighted spot where it would have been perceived—had it not been absent — and not in a dark place where the eye would have failed to cognise its presence, had it been present, that the non-existence of the jar is cognised through *anupalabdhi*.

The Rāmānuja and Mādhva standpoints.

The two prominent schools of Vaiṣṇavism, the systems of Rāmānuja and Madhva, notwithstanding their acclamation that 'negation' is cognisable only through perception and is not in need of a separate *pramāṇa* like *anupalabdhi* differed on the problem whether negation is demonstrable as a separate category or not. The Rāmānujites discarded this claim. As stressed by Śrīnivāsa, "*abhāva* is only an other form of position (*bhāva*); 'negation-prior to existence' (*prāgabhāva*) is only the continuity of the prior situation whereas 'negation-posterior to existence' (*dhvaṁsābhāva*) is the continuity of the later condition. Similarly, 'absolute-non-existence' (*atyantābhava*) and 'mutual-negation' (*anyonyābhāva*) are only the different states of the locus or the substratum." [2] Where is then the reason for warranting the existence of 'negation' as a separate category? Since negation is but an other aspect of position it is logical, according to Rāmānujites, that we condescend to its cognisability by means of 'perception' alone where the contact of the 'eye' with the locus of the 'negation' is sufficient to generate its apprehension. The Mādhva philosophers were in disagreement with the Rāmānujite treatment of the nature of negation and were inclined to defend its claim and title to separate categorization. "When one sees that 'B' is absent in 'A' it is not only the perception of 'A' but also the perception of the absence of 'B'. The argument that negation is only its substratum and nothing more is a distortion of facts. If the absence of 'B' in 'A' is only the position of 'A' then what is the basis of the judgement that 'A' is not 'B'. The judgement 'A' is 'A' is intrinsically different from the judgement 'A is not-B'

1. *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, 141.
2. *Yatīndramatadīpikā*, p. 36.

where 'not-B' happens to be an important element of experience. This element would remain inexplicable without the consideration that it is a different category in itself."[1] Notwithstanding their advocacy of negation as a separate category the Mādhva philosophers argued that it is apprehensible through perception[2] and there is no necessity of accepting a different *pramāṇa*, i.e, *anupalabdhi* for this purpose. The absence of a 'jar on the ground' is apprehensible on the verdict of a quickly produced perception without which it may be difficult to explain the immediacy of the cognition of non-existence. The famous objection of the non-availability of sense-object-contact, a necessary condition of perception is refuted by the Madhvites on the ground that the condition of sense-object-contact is applicable only to positive existence and not to 'negation'. To them, the perception of non-existence is a unitary perception of itself and its locus where the perception of non-existence arises out of the perception and sense-contact of the locus. There is thus no valid argument for denouncing the efficacy of perception in apprehending non-existence.

Vallabhite position.

Śrī Vallabha and his followers appear to be influenced by the Rāmānujite treatment of this problem in their outright rejection of the Nyāya thesis that negation is a separate and a novel category and their assertion that it is nothing but an aspect of 'position' which can be grasped by 'perception' without any involvement of *anupalabdhi* as contemplated in the philosophies of the Mīmāṁsā and the Vedānta Schools of Thought. Yet in their exposition and elaboration of the concepts of the 'existent' and the 'non-existent', which they based on their famous *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva*-doctrine, they struck such divergent notes that are verily wanting in the Rāmānujite symphony.

Negation only an aspect of position.

As asserted by Puruṣottama in his *Prasthānartanākara*, "Negation can very well be conceived as included within its inherent-cause, on the basis of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) and concealment (*tirobhāva*); it is apprehensible by the *pramāṇa* and the the means or conditions requisite for their (manifestation and concealment) cognition."[3] All the four varieties of negation mentioned in the Nyāya system of philosophy are only the

1. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 105.
2. *Pramāṇacandrikā*, p. 163 to 164.
3. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 38.

manifested and the concealed positions of a truth-form. "*Prāgabhāva* (negation prior to existence) and *pradhvaṁsābhāva* (negation posterior to existence) are the two particular and special positions of the inherent [1] or the material cause (*samavāyi*). The negation prior to existence of a 'pot', at a particular moment, is identical with its inherent-cause, the earth; to conceive of this negation as anything different from 'earth' is quite irrelevant and illogical. The Nyāya argument that the because in the two parts of the '*ghaṭa*' (pot) — while it is in making — we have the experience of its *prāgabhāva*, the separate existence of this negation-prior-to-existence is logically sustainable, is specious and based on a serious misunderstanding about the nature of the counterpositive (*pratiyogin*). The counter-entity of the negation of '*ghaṭa*' in its two parts, out of which [2] it is produced, is determined by jarness (*ghaṭatva*) whereas the counterpositive of *prāgabhāva* is necessarily universal [3] in character. This leap from one particular experience of the counter-entity to a universal form is a case of Unscientific Induction and is, therefore, illogical and confutable. The Vallabhites further argue in their refutation of the Nyāya theory : What is the counterpositive of the *prāgabhāva* of the *ghaṭa* (pot)? Is it the general or universal [4] jarness or is it the one particular jar of the moment? In the previous case the counterpositive would be 'one' and in the later case they would be 'many'. If the Naiyāyikas intend that the counterpositive be 'universal' and 'one', the consequence of such a contention would be the removal of *prāgabhāva* for ever with the production of the one and only one pot, However, if they take to the second alternative they are again in difficulty. When one perceives a pot there is the idea of negation prior to existence of the pot. But at that moment, there can be no idea of the counterpositive of this negation, unless, however, the universal character of the counterpositive is recognized involving the former difficulty, and thus there would be no knowledge of *prāgabhāva* for it is always dependent on the knowledge of the *pratiyogin* (counter-

Refutation of Nyāya.

Prāgabhāva.

1. Prāgabhāvadhvaṁsau samavāyi avasthāviśeṣarūpau. (*Ibid*, p. 38).
2. *Ibid*, p. 38.
3. *Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādaitamārtaṇḍa* śloka, XVII.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 38.

entity) and the dharmin [1] (subject). Both the alternatives are, therefore, insufficient to warrant any justification for the Nyāya doctrine of *prāgabhāva* as a *padārtha* separate and distinct from positive manifestation of Reality. Puruṣottama, therefore, defines *prāgabhāva* as 'a positive [2] situation, though involving concealment (*tirobhāva*), which is conducive to the manifestation of an object'. As against this, the *dhvaṁsābhāva* (negation posterior to existence) is defined as 'a positive situation, though involving manifestation (*āvirbhāva*), which is opposed to the present condition of the effect and is thus conducive to the destruction of the effect or the object (e.g., the pot). Like *prāgabhāva*, negation posterior to the existence of the present pot is nothing but the earth — the inherent cause to which it returns. To the Vallabhites *dhvaṁsa* (destruction) is nothing but the power of concealment of existence. Out of the two powers of the Almighty — the powers of manifestation and concealment — it is His power of concealment which changes the form (of existence) by observing which a person is struck with the idea of destruction. In any case, it is impossible to demonstrate and logically assert the character of negation-posterior-to-existence as anything different from its material or instrumental cause. *Dhvaṁsābhāva* thus is only a particular position of the inherent cause [3] which is opposed to the continuation of the effect-form.

Pradhvaṁsābhāva.

The opponent may reasonably retort: If these two forms of negation are only the aspects of the material- cause what is the sense in using such words as '*prāgabhāva*' and '*dhvaṁsa*' in our daily linguistic usage? The Vallabhites reply [4] that the usage of these words is as relative and conditional as the terms 'cause' and 'effect'. When we relate a fact or an existent (e.g., a pot) to its prior condition or the immediate cause we get an idea of *prāgabhāva*; on the other hand, when we relate the present state of the existent to its future condition — which again is the material-cause — we have the idea of destruction

1. Abhāvajñānasya dharmipratiyogijñānatayā tadānīṁ pratiyogijñānābhāvena tatprāgabhāvasya jñātumaśakyatvāt. (*Prathānaratnākara*, p. 38).
2. Tirobhāvasahakṛtā kāryāvirbhāvānukūlāvasthā prāgabhāvaḥ. Tādṛśī kāryasthitipratikūlāvasthā dhvaṁsā iti. (*Ibid*, p. 38).
3. *Ibid*, p. 39.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 39.

leading to the concept of the negation-posterior-to-existence. Thus to the Vallabhites the interpretation of *prāgabhāva* and *dhvaṁsābhāva* as the two aspects of the material-cause is in no way an obstacle to the practical mundane usage of these concepts in daily life.

Anyonyābhāva.

The concept of mutual-negation (*anyonyābhāva*) denoting separation which nevertheless is only a form of absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*) is accorded a real status by the realistic philosophies for explaining and demonstrating the different activities and efficacies of the objects considered to be separate. The 'pot' is different from 'cloth' not only because of their form but also because their powers and practical activities are also different; the pot has the capacity to fetch water whereas the capacity or the power of the 'cloth' is to provide a cover. The Naiyāyikas and the Madhvites have, therefore, argued that for explaining this experience of separate existence and divergent activities the faith in the real being of mutual-negation is a necessary condition. Vallabha and his followers are, however, in total disagreement [1] with this opinion which they refute with all their logical skill, To them, mutual-negation is nothing but concealment (*tirobhāva*) [2] which ultimately establishes its identity with a positive fact. It is one of the interesting canons and features of Vallabhite philosophy that it conceives of all the real and variegated forms of phenomena as lying concealed in [3] the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. When the Lord so desires, there is the manifestation of the 'pot' with the simultaneous concealment of all other forms, e.g., the cloth. It is because of this concealment of all other forms and their respective efficacies that a particular manifestation (e.g., the pot) is able to discharge its own function (fetching water) only. The experience of mutual-negation can, therefore, be explained without any logical aberration as the 'positive substance' itself on the basis of the doctrine of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva*.

Atyantābhāva.

The fourth and the last form of negation, i.e., absolute-negation (*atyantābhava*), is only a synonym of *tirobhāva* or concealment. The experience, 'There is no pot on the ground' is clearly indicative of *tirobhāva* for the judgement, 'It is not' is only an expression [4] of the truth of concealment. Thus the

1. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, P. 39.
2. *Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, 17.
3. *Prameyaratnārṇava*,
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 39.

Vallabhites argue that all the four forms of negation are nothing but revelations about the nature of the 'substratum' or the 'locus'. Negation, thus, is not a separate category; it is only position expressed negatively by our special intellectual construction. As the Concrete and the Personal Brahman is the only Ultimate Reality which manifests itself in all the different relations of phenomena expressed by different cases (*vibhaktis*)[1] in language, negation is only an expression of truth or reality. The Vāllabha School in its explanation of negation is quite akin to the treatment of this concept in modern Idealistic Thought. As Prof. Bradley remarks in his *Essays on Truth and Reality*, "But there is no such thing as a mere contradiction, just as there cannot be any such thing in the world as a bare negation. Every negation must have a positive ground."[2] Bosanquet clarifies this point when he writes, "Contrary Negation in its essence is affirmation with a negative intention,[3]... What we mean in denial is always the contrary, something positive."[4] Likewise to the Vallabhites all negation is position; the very thought of comprehending it as a category is absurd.

Similarity with Bradley and Bosanquet.

This treatment of the status of negation in Vāllabha philosophy is supported by their equally vehement and incisive disparagement of the theory of *anupalabdhi* as a separate means for the cognition of non-existence (*abhāva*). When negation has no truth other than the position to which it pertains, there is absolutely no rational justification for the recognition of a separate *pramāṇa* for its apprehension. As urged by Puruṣottama during the course of his polemical refutation of *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*'s defence of *anupalabdhi*, *anupalabdhi* is no means to the apprehension of non-existence for no one ever has the knowledge that negation is apprehended through *anupalabdhi*[5] just as he has the consciousness in cases of ocular perception that

Denunciation of *Anupalabdhi*.

1. Yatra yena yato yasya yasmai yadyadyathā yadā,
   Syādidaṁ bhagavān sākṣāt pradhānapuruṣeśvaraḥ.
   (*Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, XVIII)
2. Bradley, F.H. : *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 270.
3. Bosanquet : *Essentials of Logic*, p. 128.
4. *Ibid*, p. 132.
5. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 41.

it is apprehended by means of eyes. The argument that the importance and necessity of *anupalabdhi* consists not only in the non-perception of the object that would have been perceived had it existed but also in the certainty about the presence of all those conditions which would have produced the knowledge of the object had it not been absent at the spot, i.e., the locus of the *abhāva,* is from the Vallabhite standpoint quite redundant and meaningless. If the apprehension of non-existence (e.g., that of the jug) is dependent on *anupalabdhi* and *anupalabdhi* is based on ratiocination about its *yogyatā* and this ratiocination being itself dependent on perception associated with *abhāva,* we ultimately come to the conclusion that the apprehension of negation is based on negation itself — a clear [1] case of argument in circle. Puruṣottama, therefore, argues that instead of imagining a separate *pramāṇa* called *anupalabdhi* it would be more logical and consistent to emphasize that the apprehension of negation is caused [2] by the senses. Even under the thick cover of darkness, when the eyes fail to perceive, one can feel with his hands the non-existence of the 'pot'. It can be safely and universally admitted that the apprehension of non-existence of something at some place is always sensual and is invariably caused by the collocation of conditions [3] that generate the cognition of its counterpositive (*pratiyogin*) These conditions, as we have observed are the senses and their operations involving *vṛttis.*

Apprehension of 'negation' a case of perception.

Thus, in Vallabhite philosophy, the apprehension of negation is essentially a case of perception in which the cognition of the locus, a positive entity, leads to the apprehension of the negation of all entities other than itself. The sense of immediacy and directness involved in all cases of denial is explicitly due to the fact that it is a case of perception which has the distinction of being a *pramāṇa* that is always direct and immediate. The Vallabhites, therefore, acclaim that 'perception' is the only means of the cognition of 'negation'.

It should be a point to be borne in mind that this description of the nature and process of 'perception' is exclusively a narration of the

1. *Ibid.* 42.
2. Aindriyakameva ghaṭābhāvajñānam. (*Ibid*, p. 42).
3. *Ibid*, p. 38 and 42.

perceptive cognition of the mundane human mind generated by sense-object-contact [1] and operation of *vṛttis* and has no involvement in a devotee's immediate spiritual experience of God's Divine Presence. The devotee's immediate experience or perception of God is rooted not in the operation of his inner psychosis but in the Will and the Power of the Lord Who provides him suitable vision to visualise the Divine Form and Appearance. We shall, however, return to this topic in another chapter of this book.

2. INFERENCE (*ANUMĀNA*)

(a) Nature and Characteristics of Inference

Indebtedness to Nyāya.

The treatment of 'inference' in Vāllabha epistemology bears a close resemblance to the Nyāya theory and exposition of this subject. Puruṣottama with his characteristic candour acknowledges in the opening verses [2] introducing the topic of inference that his treatment of the subject is based on the other systems of philosophy without any claim to originality and contribution. Yet we may not fail to observe the deep insight with which he has distinguished the differing opinions of the Nyāya masters themselves on the various aspects of 'inference' in search after the most cogent and logical positions to be ultimately accepted in his system.

Definition of *Anumāna*.

Like most of the systems in Indian Philosophy (e.g., Nyāya, Vedānta and Rāmānuja) Puruṣottama defines *anumāna* [3] (inference) as an uncommon cause of *anumiti*, a cognition generated through the medium of knowledge. Though in its broader spectrum the soul of 'inference' in Indian Logic 'consists in asserting as fact or truth on the ground of certain given facts or truths',[4] something which is not manifested in those premises, yet the definition of *anumiti* or inferential cognition in these systems has varied in accordance with their perception of its relation with *vyāpti* (invariable concomitance). Puruṣottama, on his

Definition of *Anumiti*.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 47.
2. Anumāne tu itaravat na viśeṣo asti kaścana. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 47).
3. Anumiti karaṇaṁ anumānam.
   Jñānakaraṇakaṁ jñānaṁ anumitiḥ. (*Ibid*, p. 47 & 48).
4. Bosanquet : *The Essentials of Logic*, p. 137.

part, defines *anumiti* (inferential cognition) as 'knowledge produced by means of some other knowledge' [1] distinguishing it from perception which is dependent on sense-object-contact and thus lies outside the compass of this definition of *anumiti*. Any objection that this definition is over-extensive because it is applicable to 'memory' [2] and *upamiti* (analogy) that too are caused by 'knowledge' is specious because the real means in both cases is really not knowledge. Though it is true that 'memory' is caused by *saṁskāras* (latent tendencies) of past experience, the *saṁskaras* themselves are the subtle conditions [3] and aspects of those experiences and, therefore, identical with them; 'memory', as such, is knowledge itself and is uncaused by any other knowledge. Similarly, Puruṣottama argues, that the real means of the cognition of the *upamiti* is not the perception of similarity but the senses like the eye; the perception of similirity is only accessory to, and not the real means of analogous-cognition (*upamiti*). Thus, it is futile to object that the definition of *anumiti* as given above is over-extensive.

Criticism of Navya-Nyāya position.

The Naiyāyikas, specially the philosophers of the later Navya-Nyāya School, who emphasized that the real soul of 'inference' is the knowledge of the invariable concomitance between the reason and the probandum or *vyāpti*, argued that it would be more consistent and prudent, for demonstrating the real nature of inference and inferential cognition, to define *anumiti* as *vyāpti-jñāna* [4] (knowledge of concomitance) or 'as a cognition produced by the knowledge of invariable concomitance' (*vyāpti-jñāna-janyaṁ*). Puruṣottama, who is not at all averse to the recognition of *vyāpti* as the soul of inference, is, however, disagreeable to accept the Nyāya-suggesition. According to him, *vyāpti* is the uncommon-cause of not only *anumiti* but also of the later apperception of *vyāpti* [5] (*anuvyavasāya*) as revealed in the judgement, 'I know the concomitance between smoke and fire'; the

1. Jñānakaraṇakaṁ jñānaṁ anumitiḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 48).
2. *Ibid*, p. 48.
3. Saṁskārasya ca anubhavasūkṣmāvasthārūpatvāt avasthāyāścasvarūpā natiriktatvāt. (*Ibid*, p. 48).
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

Nyāya definition of '*anumiti*' as 'produced by the knowledge of *vyāpti*' would, therefore, involve the defect of wider extension (*ativyāpti*).

Often it is suggested by the Nyāya philosophers that instead of treating *anumiti* as 'knowledge caused by some other kind of knowledge' it should be defined as 'knowledge which is caused by the operation of *liṅga* (the reason) or *liṅga-parāmarśa* (the knowledge of the presence of the *hetu* as associated with *vyāpti* in the *pakṣa*) so that the real nature of inferential-cognition may be clear. This particular Nyāya argument, according to Puruṣottama, is also specious because [1] the definition of inference as knowledge caused by knowledge produced by *liṅga* (reason) would mean that the reason should in all cases be capable of producing the inferential cognition; but we find that reason pertaining to the past and the future moments of time is incapable of producing any inference. It is only the 'reason' of the present that creates inferential cognition; as such it is both illogical and redundant to define *anumiti* as 'knowledge caused by the knowledge of the operation of *liṅga*'. Similarly, the second alternative is also unnecessary; it is accepted only for the purpose of explaining the views of the other systems. Puruṣottama, therefore, concludes that it is quite logical and correct to define *anumiti* as '*jñānakaraṇakaṁ-jñānaṁ*' for it is neither less-extensive [2] nor over-extensive and determines the true character of knowledge produced by inference. What distinguishes inference from other modes and means of cognition is the speciality of its character that it has for its means only some kind of knowledge, a characteristic altogether absent in other forms of cognition.

Terms and conditions of Inference.

Every inference, as we have observed above, is a predication about a thing as truth or fact on the ground of certain given facts or truths; the inferential argument, therefore, invariably involves the three terms, viz., the subject (*pakṣa*), the probans (*liṅga*) and the probandum (*sādhya*) and the relation of invariable concomitance between the probans and the probandum (the *vyāpti*) which is the real ground of inference. The first term, i.e., 'the subject'is the 'thing' with regard to which there is the doubt about the presence of the

1. *Ibid*, p. 48.
2. *Ibid*, p. 48.

probandum (*sādhya*) which is desired to be established therein. The 'probans' or the 'reason' is the truth through whose mediation the probandum is sought to be established. This probans is invariably qualified by *vyāpti* [1] and subsists in the *pakṣa* (subject). In the oft-quoted inference of the 'fire in the hill' through the perception of 'smoke', the 'hill' is the *pakṣa*, the 'smoke' is the *hetu* or *liṅga* and the 'fire' is the *sādhya*. What consummates this inferential judgement is the relation of concomitance, the *vyāpti*, between the probans and the probandum and is justifiably treated as the soul of inference by almost all Indian logicians who recognize the validity of inference as a means of cognition. Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja, therefore, undertakes a full-length discussion on the problem of *vyāpti* to ascertain its real meaning and character for determining its contribution to inference.

Vyāpti.

(b) The Nature of Vyāpti

Vyāpti or the relation of invariable concomitance, as enunciated in *Prasthānaratnākara*, is the co-existence of the non-contradicted [2] (*avyabhicaritaṁ*) probans with the probandum in one and the same locus; thus the *vyāpti* between 'smoke' and 'fire' means the co-existence of 'fire' in the ground which is also the locus of 'smoke'. This definition of *vyāpti* has two essential conditions; (1) the non-contradicted character of the probaus and (2) the co-existence of the probans and the probandum in the same locus. By the *avyabhicaritaṁ* or the non-contradicted [3] character of the *hetu* the Vallabhites mean that where there is the *hetu* (probans) there is always the *sādhya* (probandum) and where is the denial (*abhāva*) of the *sādhya* there is also the denial of the *hetu*. Thus by the non-contradiction of the *hetu* in *vyāpti* the Vallabhites comprehend both its agreement in presence (*anvaya*) and agreement in difference (*vyatireka*). They, therefore, define *vyāpti* as the invariably concomitant relation which subsists [4] in the substratum which is the locus of both

Definition of *vyāpti.*

Two essential conditions of *vyāpti.*

1. Vyāptiviśiṣṭatve sati pakṣadharmatvaṁ liṅgatvaṁ. (*Ibid*, p. 48).
2. Vyāptistu avyabhicaritaṁ hetoḥ sādhyasāmānādhikaraṇyaṁ. (*Ibid*, p. 48).
3. Yatra yatra hetustatratatrasādhyaṁ, yatrayatrasādhyābhāvaḥ tatra tatra hetvābhāvaḥ iti niyamo avabhicāraḥ; tadviśiṣṭatvaṁ avyabhicaritatvaṁ. (*Ibid*, p. 48).
4. *Ibid*, p. 48.

the *sādhya* and the *hetu* as characterised by non-contradiction as a special qualification. On account of the absence of a clear definition of *vyāpti* in Vyāsa's own system [1] of philosophy, i.e., Uttara Mīmāṁsā, the Vallabhites are prone to acknowledge the validity of the concept of *vyāpti* as contemplated and explained in other orthodox (*āstika*) schools, specially the Nyāya system of logic. Puruṣottama, therefore, asserts that the definitions of *vyāpti* as 'the absence of the *hetu* in the locus of the absolute non-existence of *sādhya*' or 'absence in the locus other than containing the *sādhya*', as available in the Nyāya system, is not inadmissible. [2] He also expresses his willingness for regarding the truth of the later Navya-Nyāya definitions of *vyāpti* specially those propounded by Viśvanātha Pañcānana in his *Kārikāvalī*. Viśvanātha defines *vyāpti* as 'the non-relation of the probans with the locus which is other than the substratum of the *sādhya*'.[3] In the inference, 'The hill is fiery because of smoke', the smoke is the probans, the substratum or the *sādhya* is the kitchen and the locus other than this substratum is the pond; the *vyāpti*, therefore, is the denial of any relation of the *hetu* the smoke, with this substratum (the pond). In their eagerness to frame a compact and perfectly logical and infallacious definition, the author of *Kārikāvalī* again [4] defines '*vyāpti*' as the co-existence of the *hetu* (probans) with the *sādhya* (probandum) which is not the counterpositive of the negation subsisting in the locus containing the *hetu*. Thus to illustrate the co-existence of 'smoke' with 'fire' which is not the counterpositive of absolute-negation subsisting in all kinds of loci which contain the *hetu* is what is intended by the concept of invariable concomitance or *vyāpti*. Both of these definitions as detailed in *Nyāyamuktāvalī* are accorded a stamp of validity in Vallabhite logic as explained by Puruṣottama.

Puruṣottama's acceptance of the Nyāya definition of *vyāpti*.

The Vallabhite interpretation of the relation of invariable concomitance as the co-existence of the probans and the probandum in the same locus, on the footprints of the systems of Nyāya and Advaita

1. *Ibid.*
2. Sādhyātyantābhavavadavṛttitvaṁ sādhyavadanyāvṛttitvaṁ. (Ibid).
3. Vyāptiḥ sādhyavadanyasminnasaṁbandha udāhṛtaḥ.
   (*Kārikāvalī*, kārikā 68, with *Muktāvalī*).
4. Athavāhetumanniṣṭhavirhāpratiyoginā,
   Sādhyena hetorekādhikaraṇyaṁ vyāptirucyate. (*Kārikāvalī*, kārika 69).

Divergence of views from Rāmānuja and Madhva.

Vedānta, has evoked less sympathy from the other masters of Vaiṣṇavism. The logicians of both the Rāmānuja [1] and the Mādhva Schools instead of imagining *vyāpti* as co-existence (*sāmānādhikaraṇa*) in the same locus construed it as an unfailing and inseparable relation precluding the existence of the reason without the existence of the consequence. Jaya Tīrtha, in his *Nyāya-sudhā*, termed this relation [2] as '*avinābhāva*'. To them, the restriction of *vyāpti* to cases of co-existence alone is fallacious because many kinds of inferences remain uncovered by this definition. The inference of rainfall in the upper regions from the perception of the rising level of water in the river of the lower terrain or the inference of the rise of Rohiṇī, a constellation,[3] because Kṛttikā (another constellation) has already arisen will remain unexplained if the idea of *vyāpti* is limited only to co-existence, for in these two inferences, there is no co-existence of the reason and the consequence. In order to seek a wider justification for *vyāpti* or concomitance it is essential that its field of operation be enlarged to contain such cases also. It is, therefore, expedient in their view to conceive *vyāpti* as an unfailing and inseparable relation between the *hetu* and the *sādhya* instead of defining it as mere co-existence.

If we ponder over the genesis and the development of the concept of *vyāpti* we would find that the restriction of *vyāpti* only to cases of co-existence has its reason in a pragmatic outlook requiring the existence of consequence in the subject which, however, is impossible without the co-existence of the reason and the probandum. The Naiyāyika or a Vallabhite might try to include the above cases of inference also within co-existence by conceptually enlarging the field of the locus but then it would be too far-fetched. The Mādhva definition of *vyāpti* as *avinābhāva*, which includes both inferences by residues (*pariśeṣa*) and implication (*arthāpatti*) is certainly more extensive than the Nyāya, Vedānta and the Vallabhite definitions.

The psychological process of inference [4] may, however, be explained thus; to one who has perceived the co-existence between

1. Tena nirupādhikatayā niyatasaṁbandho vyāptiḥ. (*Yatīndramatadīpikā*, p. 18).
2. Avinābhāvo vyāptiḥ. (*Nyāyasudhā*, p. 185).
3. Narain, K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 107.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 49.

Psychological process of Inference.

the probans and the probandum in the past the very sight of the probans (*hetu*) through the operation of the *saṁskāras* brings to memory the relation of invariable concomitance between the *hetu* (smoke) and the *sādhya* (fire) and its co-existence in such cases as kitchen and he concludes that the place where the *hetu* is perceived also contains the *sādhya*. It is through the perception of the smoke and its association with the memory of *vyāpti* that he decides and comes to the right knowledge that there is 'fire' at the place of the 'smoke'. This resultant knowledge of the 'fire' which is called *anumiti* or inferential cognition is a kind of right knowledge [1] or *niścaya*.

(c) Kinds of Inference

On the basis of the nature of *vyāpti* Puruṣottama classifies Inference as (1) *Kevalavyatirekī* and (2) *Anvayavyatirekī*. The *Kevalavyatirekī* inference is that in which the *vyāpti* is comprehended essentially on the basis of the method of agreement in absence. In such cases of inference the relation of invariable concomitance is always between the 'absence' of probandum (*sādhya*) and the 'the absence of the probans (hetu)' because there is no locus other than the *pakṣa* (the subject of the inference) in the whole of this world where the presence of both the *hetu* and the *sādhya* might be perceived. It is because of the specific nature of the terms of inference (the reason and the probandum) that the operation of the method of agreement in presence is rendered futile and powerless. The inference :

Kevalavyatirekī.

> "Earth is a substance different from all other substances, Because of being earth." [2]

is an instance of this type of inference. The rational justification for the validity of this inference is the *vyāpti* that "wherever a substance is different from 'earth' there is no 'earth-ness' for example water."

In the *Anvayavyatirekī* variety of inference the relation of invariable concomitance between the *hetu* and the *sādhya* is comprehended both by the method of agreement in presence [3] and agreement in absence. In such cases,

Anvayavyatirekī.

1. Anumānaṁ ca dvividhaṁ kevalavyatirekyanvayavyatirekibhedāt. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 49).
2. *Ibid*, p. 49.
3. *Ibid*, p. 49.

the presence of the reason entails the presence of the probandum whereas the absence of the probandum also entails the absence of the reason. The famous example of the inferential argument that 'the hill is fiery because it is smoky' is a case of this type of inference; both the methods of agreement in presence and agreement [1] in absence can be employed in the following way :

(1) Method of Agreement in Presence (*Anvayavyāpti*) :

The hill is fiery, - pratijñā
Because it is smoky, - hetu
That which is smoky is fiery, e.g., kitchen, - udāharaṇa
The hill is also smoky, - upanaya
Therefore, the hill is fiery. - nigamana

(2) Method of Agreement in Absence (*Vyatirekavyāpti*)

The hill is fiery,
Because it is smoky,
That which is not fiery is not smoky, e.g., a lake,
The hill is not like that,
Therefore, the hill is fiery.

Svārtha and *Parārtha*.

From another standpoint, inference is again classified into two, like Nyāya, viz., (1) *Svārtha* and (2) *Parārtha*. An inferential argument which is employed only for concluding the presence of the *sādhya* in a thing for one's own self is termed *Svārthānumāna*, whereas, the inference which is employed for explaining the validity of the judgement to someone else is called Parārthānumāna ; this type of inference is usually a chain of several-stepped arguments. The number of premises to be employed in a syllogistic argument has, however, been a matter of controversy in Indian logic. To the Naiyāyikas and the Sāṁkhya philosophers these premises are five, viz., (1) *Pratijñā*[2] (proposition to be established),

Number of proposition.

(2) *hetu* (reason), (3) *dṛṣṭānta* (example), (4) *upanaya* (the statement of the reason as existing in the subject) and (5) *nigamana* (conclusion). The Buddhists opined that the purpose of the inferential argument could well be served by only two premises, viz., *pratijñā* and *udāharaṇa* (as illustrated in the

1. Sukhwal : *Vallabha Sampradāya aur uske Siddhānta*. (Hindi), p. 61 to 62.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 49.

example 'All that is real is momentary just as a pot') and there is no justification for framing other propositions. The Mīmāṁsakas, on the other hand, recognised only three *avayavas* but they differed among themselves on the question of their identity. Those following the *Śabarabhāṣya* identified these three as *udāharaṇa* (example containing *vyāpti*), *upanaya* and *nigamana* whereas Kumārila and his follower Pārthasārathīmiśra thought that these three premises are *pratijñā, hetu* and *udāharaṇa*.

The justification and validity of Kumārila's approach on the question of the number of premises was understood and accepted by Puruṣottama. According to him, it is logical and prudent to give credence to the theory that a syllogistic argument must have only [1] three permises, viz., *pratijñā*, *hetu*, and *udāharaṇa* (or *dṛṣṭānta*), *Pratijñā* is the proposition predicating the probandum in the subject, for example, 'the hill is fiery'. The reason for the assertion of *pratijñā* is explained through the second premise, the *hetu,* which is a statement about the reason as associated with *vyāpti* usually expressed in language with '*ablative*' for example, 'Because it is smoky', The third premise, i.e., the *udāharaṇa* (example) is a reply to the enquiry : How is the reason (the smoke) indicative of the probandum (the fire)? The *udāharaṇa*, according to Puruṣottama, is a statement about the example which explicates the relation of invariable concomitance between the reason and the probandum as well as the presence of the reason — as associated with *vyāpti* — in the subject (*pakṣadharmatā*). These three premises in themselves, according to Vallabhites, are sufficient to explain the whole of the inferential argument to another person without involving the justification for the inclusion of *upanaya* and *nigamana* as contended by the Nyāya logicians. The validity of this theory of inference consisting of only three premises is sought to be established [2] on the basis of the *Bhāgavata* where Śuka employs only these three for proving his contention.

(d) The Fallacies (Hetvābhāsa)

The validity of an inferential argument, as we have seen, depends always on the correctness of the 'reason' and its association with *vyāpti*. Any defect in the nature of 'reason' and its association with 'concomitance'

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid*, p. 49.

Vallabhite acceptance of the five Nyāya Fallacies.

necessarily renders the argument fallacious. These defects of the *hetu* or the reason, called fallacies, are termed in Indian Logic as '*Hetvābhāsas*' because it is due to their presence that the *hetu* in the argument, though unreal, appears [1] to be real (*abhāsa*). The Nyāya system of logic has discovered five different kinds [2] of *hetvābhāsas* : these are acceptable verbatim to the Vallabhites also. These five fallacies are (1) *Savyabhicāra*, (2) *Viruddha*, (3) *Satpratipakṣa*, (4) *Asiddha* and (5) *Bādhita*. The explanation and description of these fallacies with the stamp of Vallabhite approval is as under.

Sādhāraṇa-anaikāntika.

(1) *Savyabhicāra or Anaikāntika* : The *hetu* which establishes both the probandum and the 'absence of probandum' in the same subject is vitiated by [3] the fallacy called '*Savyabhicāra*' or '*Anaikāntika*'. The *Anaikantika* is of two types,viz., (1) *Sādhāraṇa* and (2) *Asādhāraṇa*. The reason which establishes both the probandum and its absence through the operation of *anvayavyāpti* or the method of agreement in presence suffers from the fallacy known [4] as '*Sādharaṇa-anaikāntika*' for example the argument, 'The hill is smoky because it is fiery'. In this inference the reason, 'fiery', whose *vyāpti* with the probandum, 'smoky', is established through the method of agreement in presence is found both in the similar [5] and contrary instances (*sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa*), viz., the kitchen and the 'iron ball of fire'; As defined in *Kārikāvalī*, the *hetu* which is present in both *sapakṣa* (similar instances) and *vipakṣa* (contrary instances) is termed as '*sādhāraṇa-anaikāntika*'. The example cited above is, therefore, an illustration of this fallacy. Another example of *sādhāraṇa-anaikāntika* is the inference, 'The hill is fiery, because it is a cognitum (*prameyatvāt*)'. In this case the reason (because of being a cognitum) is also present in a 'tank' which is the locus of the absence of the probandum (fire).

1. Hetuvadābhāsanta iti hetvābhāsāḥ duṣṭahetavaḥ. (*Nyāyabodhinī* on *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 110).
2. *Tarkasaṁgraha*, Chapter on Anumāna, and *Kārikāvalī* kārika 71. with *Nyāyamuktāvalī*.
3. Tatra sādhyatadabhāvatayā pratīyamānaḥ savyabhicāraḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50).
4. Tatra sādhyābhāvavadvṛtti sādhāraṇo anaikāntikaḥ. (*Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 114).
5. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50.

Asādhāraṇa-anaikantika.

The essential determinant of the asādhāraṇa variety of *anaikāntika* is the absence [1] of the reason (*hetu*) both in the similar and contrary instances and its presence only in the subject (*pakṣa*). As an illustration the logicians cite the inference, 'Sound is non-eternal, because it contains soundness'; here 'soundness' which constitutes the reason is present only in 'sound' and is conspicuously absent in all the eternal and non-eternal existents. As explained by Puruṣottama, the *vyāpti*, in such cases, is arrived at only by the method of agreement in absence without any involvement of the method of agreement in presence.

Anupasaṁhāri discarded by Puruṣottama.

Besides the above two varieties, the Nyāya logicians have thought of a third kind of *Anaikāntika* which they call *Anupasaṁghārī* or the Fallacy of Inconclusive Reason. When in an inference the reason is such that it precludes the possibility of any illustration, whether present (*anvaya*) or absent (*vyatireka*) it is a case of *Anupasaṁhārī*. *Nyāyamuktāvalī* defines the fallacy [2] of Inconclusive Reason as that of which the subject is exclusively affirmative with the result that nothing lies outside the range of the presence of the reason to warrant the possibility of any illustration (*dṛṣṭāna*). The most important example of this kind of fallacy is the inference,' 'Each thing is non-eternal, because it is a cognitum', for here the reason (being cognitum) is applicable to every worldly existent and as such all existents in the world become its subject (*pakṣa*). There is, therefore, no different locus to find an illustration (whether present or absent). Puruṣottama, however, finds this concept of *anupasaṁghārī-hetu* rather otiose and rests satisfied with only his two-fold classification of Anaikāntika-Fallacy.

Viruddha defined.

(2) *Viruddha* : The Fallacy of *Viruddha* or the contradictory reason, according to Nyāya, occurs when the reason (*hetu*) is co-existent or is prevaded [3] with the 'absence of the probandum'. Puruṣottama defines it by asserting that the *hetu* is contradictory (*viruddha*) when its locus is absolutely different from the locus of the probandum, [4] for example, the argument,

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Kārikāvalī* with *Muktāvalī*, kārika 74.
3. Yaḥ sādhyavati naivāsti sa viruddha udāhṛtaḥ. (*Ibid*).
4. Sādhyāsamānādhikaraṇo heturviruddhaḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50).

'It is a cow, because it has the character of a horse'. To Puruṣottama this fallacy is identical with the Nyāya '*svarūpāsiddhi*' in which the reason [1] is altogether absent in the subject.

Definition.

(3) *Satpratipakṣa* : Puruṣottama defines this fallacy as the one in which the [2] *hetu* is such that it obstructs the cognition of the probandum (*sādhya*) in the subject (*pakṣa*). The Naiyāyikas, however, explain this fallacy by defining it as the argument in which there is a possibility of observing another *hetu* that may prove the 'absence of the probandum'.[3] The reasoning, 'Water is hot, because it is tactual' : 'Water is not-hot because it has no heat', is to the Naiyāyikas an illustration of this fallacy. The very name of this fallacy indicates that the assertion of the predicate in a subject is liable to be annulled by the employment of another argument with a different reason.

Definition and classification of *asiddha*.

(4) *Asiddha* : The argument in which the reason is unfounded is said to contain the Fallacy of the Unfounded Reason or *Asiddha-hetvābhāsa*. As in Nyāya, the Vallabhites classify [4] Asiddha into three (1) *Svarūpāsiddhi*, (2) *Āśrayāsiddhi* and (3) *Vyāpyatvāsiddhi* and define them almost on similar lines. When the reason is altogether absent [5] in the subject it is termed as *svarūpāsiddhi-doṣa*, for example, 'The pot is earthen, because it is a cloth'. Here the reason, 'being a cloth', is never present in the subject 'the pot'. When, on the other hand, the subject of an inference is absolutely devoid of the subject-hood or *pakṣatva*, the determinant (*avacchedaka*) of the subject, the fallacy is known as Āśrayāsiddhi. If one argues : 'The sky-lotus is fragrant, because it is a lotus', he is in the grip of this fallacy. The third variety of *asiddhi*, the *Vyāpyatvāsiddhi* occurs in such inferences where the reason, as employed in the argument, is devoid of the *vyāpti* necessarily associated with it. If one were to argue by observing the rising dust and misunderstanding it as smoke that there is fire, he would be

1. Svarūpāsiddhirnāma pakṣe hetvabhāvaḥ.
(*Nyāyabodhinī* on *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 119).
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50.
3. *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 118.
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50.
5. Pakṣe hetvabhāvaḥ svarūpāsiddhiḥ. Pakṣe pakṣatāyā abhāvaḥ āśrayāsiddhiḥ.
(*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 50).

committing this fallacy. Puruṣottama, however, does not define *vyāpyatvāsiddha* as a reason vitiated by *upādhi* though he is conscious that the presence of *upādhi* is a formidable [1] defect in any inferential argument. Like Nyāya, he too defines *upādhi* as that which being pervasive with the probandum is not pervasive with the probans, for example, the wet-fuel. As the wet-ness of the fuel is a necessary condition in the production of smoke the inference, 'The hill is smoky, because it is fiery', would be fallacious.

(5) *Bādhita or Kālātyayāpadiṣṭa* : If a logician advances an inferential argument in which there is an absolute negation of the probandum (*sādhya*) in the subject (*pakṣa*) as demonstrated by other means of cognition e.g., perception, he commits the fallacy technically termed [2] '*Bādhita*' or '*Kālātyayāpadiṣṭa*', for example, the inference, 'Water is fiery, because it is knowable'. It is an essential feature of this fallacy that the negation of the probandum in the subject is ascertained on the strength of other *pramāṇas*.

Nature of *Bādhita*.

These five kinds of *hetvābhāsas* ultimately lead to fallacious inferential cognitions; therefore, a logician must always avoid them for arriving at a valid and right inferential cognition (*anumiti*). The utility of inference as a means of arriving at right knowledge on practical and mundane matters is too well known to be doubted. Yet the problem whether inference is competent to serve as a means to the knowledge of transcendental and divine truths is a question which we postpone for treatment in another chapter of this book.

3. TESTIMONY (*ŚABDA*)

(a) Nature of Śabda-Pramāṇa

With the only exception of the Vaiśeṣikas, all the orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy are unanimous in recognizing the function and validity of verbal cognition (*śabda*) not only as a separate means of cognition but probably the one to shed blazing light on the existence and the nature of transcendental verities. Even the Jainas and the Buddhists who disputed the authority of the Vedas had faith in the infallibility

Importance of testimony.

1. *Ibid*, p. 50.
2. Pakṣe sādhya śūnyatvaṁ bādhaḥ. (*Ibid*, p. 50).

of their own scriptures. The nature of *Śabda-pramāṇa* or testimony as revealed in the expositions of different systems of Orthodox Indian Philosophy would reveal that they distinguish this *pramāṇa* from the other means of cognition such as perception and inference by virtue of the fact that in it we have the knowledge of things from relevant sentences uttered by infallible and reliable persons and by comprehending the meaning of the words and sentences ejaculated by them.

The two elements of testimony.

The validity of *Śabda* or verbal-testimony, therefore, depends, firstly, on the infallibility of the authority speaking them out and, secondly, on the right understanding of the meaning of words and sentences communicated by them. This is why Gotama had defined *Śabda*,[1] 'as the assertion of a reliable and infallible person, implying both *āptatva* and linguistic communication (*āptopadeśaḥ śabdaḥ*). Though *āptatva* is the soul of testimony and acquires considerable philosophical significance yet the proper comprehension of the meaning of linguistic communication in the form of words and sentences is no less important especially when they are coming down to us from the hoary past in the form of scriptures and revealed-utterances. The Vallabhites, recognizing the importance and value of both, have entered into a full-length discussion on these two aspects of testimony as a means of valid cognition.

Puruṣottama, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, suggests that testimony

Nature of testimony kinds of authority.

is the instruction of an *āpta* or an infallible and trustworthy authority who always describes a thing as it really [2] is and whose knowledge is never subject to contradiction. Such an authority [3] or an *āpta* is of two kinds, viz., *laukika* (mundane) and *alaukika* (trans-mundane); out of these the *laukika* authority belongs to the wise men of the world and refers strictly to worldy matters, whereas,

Vedas, the supreme authority.

the *alaukika* or the trans-mundane authority is a trait of the seers (ṛṣis), the divine men and the Vedas. As conceived by the Vallabhites, there is a gradation

1. Mishra, Umesha. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 510.
2. Sa ca āptopadeśarūpaḥ. Āptaśca yathāsthitārthavādī. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 13).
3. *Ibid*, p. 13.

in the strength of infalliblity or *āptatva* [1] beginning with the authority of the *ṛṣis* and ending with that of Īśvara whose word or the Veda is the apex of this gradational hierarchy and is the document of Supreme Authority. The Vallabhites, like many other exponents of Indian Philosophy, have an unswerving belief that the Vedas are invested with Supreme Authority especially on such transcendent matters as *dharma*, the gods, the individual-self, and the Ultimate Reality or Brahman; they are self-valid, non-relative and eternal. As the Vedas are manifested in the form of Word or Śabda, Śabda, according to Vallabha and his followers, is the supreme *pramāṇa* never liable to contradiction either by perception or inference. To the question as to what are the conditions that warrant the infallibility of authority it may be replied that like most other systems of Indian Thought, the Vallabhites also imply the absence of such defects as attachment, hatred, perversion, etc.— the products of *rajas* — as a sure sign of the spiritual advancement and infallibility of the person concerned; in other words, the rise of the *sattva-guṇa* in an individual tends to make him infallible. A person who is 'free from intellectual dullness, defects of sense-organs, and bereft of various erroneous notions' [2] is the *āpta*.

Conditions of *laukika* infallibility.

Often it is objected that if the rise of the *sattva-guṇa* in a person is the sure determinant of the decisive and the non-contradicted character of his knowledge we should be content with the utterances of the *ṛṣis* and the *yogins* without calling for the necessity and the utility of the Vedas. Moreover, the proponent of the *śabda-pramāṇa* as a separate means of cognition is unjustified in his claim; as this *pramāṇa* ultimately depends on 'sound' and, therefore, ear, it is only a mode of perception. The Vaiśeṣikas, however, had a tendency to incorporate *śabda-pramāṇa* within inference acclaiming the futility and irrelevance of treating *śabda* as a separate and novel means of cognition.

Arguments favouring the consideration of *śabda* as a separate *pramāṇa*.

The Vallabhites refute the above objection by contending that because the sermons of the *ṛṣis* are ultimately rooted in the Vedas

1. Uttarotaraṁ ca eṣāmāptatvādhikyāt paramāptamīśvare paryavasyatīti. Tadupadeśarūpo veda eva anapekṣyaṁ pramāṇaṁ. (*Ibid*, p. 13).
2. Mishra, Umesha. : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 18n.

and because very often we come across certain contradictions among their standpoints it is preposterous to imagine that the function and the utility of the Vedas can be dispensed with simply by pinning our faith only to the teachings of the seers and the *yogins*. As regards to other objection, the Vallabhites contend almost like the Mīmāṁsakas that because [1] *śabda* as a means of cognition involves the comprehension of the meaning of 'words' and their relations as well as the meaning of sentences, its *modus operandi* and *vṛtti* is different from that of perception and inference. As the "meanings of sentences involving a knowledge of the relation of words cannot be known by any other acknowledged means of proof" [2] We have to accept *śabda* as a separate means of knowledge.

(b) Vedas – The Supreme Authority or Pramāṇa

The infallible validity of the Vedas.

Vallabha and his followers had an ardent faith in the absolute supremacy of the Vedas and their unsublated validity. Of all the *pramāṇas,* they alone are capable of revealing the nature and truth of transcendent existents and transcendental principles lying beyond the grasp and approach of such mundane and experiential means of cognition as perception and inference whose deliveries in these matters are usually sublatable. The main argument that demonstrates the validity par-excellence of the Vedas, according to Vallabhites, is the eternality of their relation with objects of their revelation, a point to be elaborated further in this chapter, and the truth that their instructions are never subject to contradiction at any point of time and space. The reason why the Vedas are invested with such characteristics and are self-valid is the fact that they are the creations and revelations of the Personal Omniscient God and are *pauruṣeya* in the strict Vallabhite sense.

Whether Vedas are *Pauruṣeya* or *Apauruṣeya.*

The question whether the Vedas are *pauruṣeya* (personal) or *apauruṣeya* (Impersonal) has been a problem of heated debate and controversy in Indian Philosophy. The Naiyāyikas who were the exponents of the doctrine of *pauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas upheld that because

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 13.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 395.

a Vedic sentence, though spoken by infallible authority, is exactly of the same nature as a sentence uttered by any other person, for example Kālidāsa, it should have its origin in some person. Moreover, because the words and sounds are, by nature, destructible, the Vedas which are a collection of such words and sounds are also destructible and as such they must be treated as having been created by some person. Vedas are, therefore, *pauruṣeya* and not *apauruṣeya*. But the Vedas with their treasure of immense knowledge can be the creation of no person other than the Omniscient God who alone is capable of producing them. Vedas, according to Nyāya, are created by Īśvara who by assuming a 'phantasmal body' (*nirmāṇa-kāya*)[1] reveals them for the benefit of His devotees.

Nyāya, doctrine of *pauruṣeyatva*.

The Mīmāṁsakas vehemently opposed this Nyāya doctrine of the *Pauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas and the destructive and non-eternal character of the Vedic Words and injunctions out of the fear that these theories would ultimately shake the foundations of the ultimate and sempiternal validity of Vedic injunctions. Accordingly, they left no stone unturned in proving that the Vedas are eternal in themselves without having been created by any agency either human or divine. The 'Word' together with its denotation is never subject to any destruction and hence acquires an agency only for its revelation and not creation. The Mīmāṁsakas, therefore, expounded the validity of the Vedas-including the Vedic words and injunctions — by philosophising that they are eternal, immutable and everlasting. The Vedas are, therefore *apauruṣeya* (Impersonal) and not *pauruṣeya* as contended in Nyāya.

Mīmāṁsā theory of *apauruṣeyatva*.

All other systems of Indian Philosophy have mostly vaccilated in their exposition of the nature of Vedas between these two poles of *pauruṣeyatva* and *apauruṣeyatva*. The philosophical schools of the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā tradition have generally endeavoured to bank upon the *apauruṣeyatva*-thesis notwithstanding their recognition of the truth that they are the utterances of God. The Advaitins of the Śāṁkara School while agreeing with the Nyāya concept of the non-eternality of Vedic words by their

The Śaṁkarite view.

1. Mishra, Umesha. : *The Conception of Matter*, p. 389.

ingenious interpretation that because the Vedas, as manifested by Īśvara in each aeon, is similar to the Veda of the past aeon, the Vedas as such are not destructible. According to Śaṁkara and his followers, the Lord as associated with His *Māyā* reveals the Veda to certain beings at the beginning of each creation on a pattern identical to the Veda of the past aeon. This similar manifestation of the Veda by the Lord in each creation is rendered possible through the latent tendencies in His mysterious *Māyā* (acintya-māyā) with which He is always associated. Thus the Vedāntins try to justify the *apauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas while acknowledging the truth that the Vedic words and sentences are destructible and non-eternal. Vācaspati, in his *Bhāmatī* explains that the essential character of *pauruṣeyatva* is the independence of personality in his utterance. It is this independence which is likely to effect the testimony of authority on account of his incorrect and false knowledge. As the Vedas are only revelations and not the creations of Īśvara in each successive aeon, they may justifiably be termed *'apauruṣeya'*, Citsukhācārya, one of the doyans of Advaitism, in his *Tattvapradīpikā*, formulated that the concept of *pauruṣeyatva* is limited only to such cases where the revelation of authority depends on the knowledge obtained through other *pramāṇas*; hence, the Vedas whose revelation through the agency of Īśvara is known only through them, and not through any other *pramāṇa*, are *apauruṣeya* and not *pauruṣeya*. Almost an identical approach is visible in the Rāmānujite system where also [1] Īśvara is conceived as instructing the Veda to Brahmā in the beginning of creation on the basis of His memory of the Veda of the past creation. The Mādhva School, however, was more inclined towards the Mīmāṁsā thesis that the Vedas as well as the Vedic words and sentences are eternal and beginningless and God never creates the Vedas; He is only the first exponent of the *śrutis*, who gives to words, which originally were in a confused and hotch-potch state without any system, an order [2] in succession allotting them priority and posteriority through the order of His own Buddhi.

The Vallabhite reaction to this controversy is rather interesting. As an offshoot to the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā, Vallabha's system of Vedanta

1. Sargādau bhagavāṅścaturmukhāya pūrvapūrvakramaviśiṣṭānvedān smṛtvā upadiśati. (*Yatīndramatadīpikā*, p. 25).
2. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 46.

Vallabhite thesis that Vedas are both *apauruṣeya* and *pauruṣeya*.

does not deny the Impersonal character or *apauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas but it is equally emphatic that it would be illogical and irrelevant to assert that the Vedas are not Personal or *pauruṣeya* at all. Those who imagine that 'personality' is an obstruction and negation of the eternality and the unimpeded validity of the Vedas are under a serious misunderstanding of the real intention and the import of these two words. By the term '*apauruṣeya*' [1] is simply meant that the Vedas are not created by any human agency; it does not imply within its connotation the denial of Divine Agency as well. Similarly, the concept of '*pauruṣeyatva*' does not entail that the creations of a Personal Being are necessarily destructible and non-eternal so as to interfere ultimately with the eternal validity of the Vedas. The philosophy of Veda as

Vallabhite interpretation of *pauruṣeyatva* and *apauruṣeyatva*.

Personal in the Nyāya sense where the creator or God is an extra-cosmic Being, engaged in the origination and destruction of world-order, including the Vedic Word, may be ultimately harmful to the supreme validity of the Veda as *pramāṇa* but in the context of Śri Vallabha's philosophy of Personal Brahman as the immanent and the material cause of cosmic evolution and involution, in the sense of manifestation and concealment, the doctrine of the *pauruṣeyatva* of Vedas is not at all inconsistent. As mentioned in the *śruti*, the Vedas are the very breath of the Ultimate Truth or Brahman; Vedas are thus caused and created, in the sense of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*), by Brahman, The Personal Brahman, who is free from every possibility of defect and error and is the supreme authority (*āpta*). It is equally preposterous to argue that what is personal is always invalid becaue even the proponents of this view acknowledge the validity of percéption and inference notwithstanding their personal character. What vitiates the authority of Personality is not its *pauruṣeyatva* but the possibility of the presence of defect which synchronises with all human creations. There is, therefore, no harm or error in treating them as '*apauruṣeya*'. The Vedas are thus, in Vallabhite philosophy, both Personal and Impersonal in the senses described above.

The philosophical schools that are opposed to the recognition of 'testimony' as a separate means of cognition often object that because

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 191.

Reply to objections.

knowledge by means of words is ultimately dependent on the fact of hearing or auditory perception, this relativity establishes that the real means of cognition is 'perception' and not 'verbal-testimony'. Puruṣottama refutes this argument by contending that even if auditory perception is acknowledged as an intermediary condition in the psychological genesis of the verbal cognition, the element of validity involved in its knowledge (*prāmāṇya*) is quite novel and independent of audition, a variety of perception. Moreover, it is an over-generalization to assert that every kind of verbal-testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) is dependent on perception for Vedas that alone are competent to issue instructions regarding injunction and prohibition (*dharma*) and to disclose the truth about transcendent matters and facts are quite independent of this relativity of perception. It is, however, true that in normal, empirical human life verbal-knowledge is conditioned by auditory-perception; yet the relationship is inapplicable to the Vedic Word having its source in Divinity. The opponent might argue that in the context of the Vallabhite sympathy towards the Personal (*pauruṣeya*) character of the Veda, it can be assumed that they are the objects of God's perception and, therefore, they too are dependent on perception. But the Vallabhites refute that even if the theory of the Lord's perception of the Vedas be worthy of acceptance it does not contradict the validity of *Śabda* as a separate and novel *pramāṇa* for in the Lord's perception there is no utilization of the intellect as a means or tool. God manifests the Veda as directly, immediately and effortlessly as the exhaling of the human breath without any involvement of a thought-process and sequence. There is, therefore, no justification, from the Vallabhite standpoint, in the opponent's refutation of 'verbal-cognition' as a valid and a separate and novel means of cognition.

(c) Linguistic Philosophy of The Vedic Word

The problem of linguistic analysis.

The above discussion about the nature of Vedas and their infallible validity leads us to the next important problem, the problem of the linguistic communication involving the right understanding of the meaning of words and sentences as communicated by them. The problem acquires an added significance and urgency in view of the tremendous power of the Vedic Word to illumine itself in a wide

spectrum and thus leading to divergent linguistic speculations in the history of Indian Thought. Every kind of linguistic analysis whether of a mundane, empirical sentence or of a revealed text from the most holy sacred Scripture has a three-pronged movement of enquiry : one with regard to the real nature of 'word' the second, regarding its 'meaning' and the third about the nature of the relation between the word and its meaning. These three — the word, the meaning and the relation between them — are the important terms whose proper knowledge and right understanding is alone instrumental in illuminating the secret depths and subterranean forces of verbal-testimony as a valid means of cognition.

The problem.

The modern interpreters of India's old linguistic philosophies have classified these speculations into two different traditions, viz., the Brahmanical tradition stemming from the Vedas and recognizing the divine origin of language and the Naturalistic tradition, basing itself on the "conception of language as arbitrary and conventional tool"[1] with a disgust for raising language to a divine and revelatory status. The proponents of the Brahmanical tradition and the doctrine of the divine origin of the 'word' were chiefly the schools of Sāṁkhya-Yoga, Vedānta, Mīmāṁsā, Kāśmīra Śaivism and the School of Grammar whereas the naturalistic tradition was created and upheld prominently by the Cārvaka materialists and the Buddhists. The Schools of Nyāya and Jainas, however, occupied an intermediary status. As the Vāllabha School of Vedānta claims its heritage to the broad Mīmāṁsā tradition — including both the Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṁsas — it represents the Brahmanical tradition and is thus characterised by all its qualities.

The two traditions of linguistic philosophy.

Let us first take up the question of the nature of 'word'. In Vedic literature, the enquiry into the ultimate nature of 'speech' has led the seers to a visualisation of the truth of identity between 'speech' and 'Brahman'. They conceived of Śabda Brahman as a monistic state from which all innumerable varieties of sounds, verbal-forms— syllables, vowels, consonants etc. — spring forth and into which they ultimately return. This Śabda Brahman or Parā-vāk, as nomenclatured

The nature of Word, the Śabda Brahman.

1. Murti, T.R.V. : Forward to '*The Sphoṭa Theory of Language*'.

in the later Āgamika literature, manifests itself at a stage when Pure Nirguṇa Brahman desires to differentiate Itself and appear as 'speech' and its 'meaning'. This aspect of Brahman which by nature is eternal, unitary and transcendental is identified with the Veda or the Divine Word generally represented and explained by the Sacred 'Om'. As the Veda, the ultimate ground of all speech, is eternal, all 'speech' and its relation to its 'meaning' is also eternal. This doctrine of the eternality of speech and its meaning intended by the Vedic concept of the Divine origin of Language is repugnant not only to an attempt at the naturalistic interpretation of language emphasizing the relationship between a 'word' and its 'meaning' as arbitrary and purely a matter of convention but also to any speculation that conceives of 'words' merely as destructible conglomerations of syllables or sounds and, therefore, non-eternal. This Brahmanical tradition which upholds the eternality of the 'word' of the 'Veda', its meaning and their mutual relationship was vociferously maintained by fresh reinforcement of arguments by the Schools of Mīmāṁsā, Advaita Vedānta and others of this tradition against all the attacks from the Nyāya and Buddhist Schools. The Vāllabha School of Vedānta too contributed to this glorious and ancient tradition by arguing in favour of the eternal character of 'speech' and the Veda. In this, though its thinkers exhibit a sympathy for the Mīmāṁsist approach, specially as represented by Kumārila, they have promoted their own views, as we shall observe below, by criticising them on several points. The Vāllabha linguistic thesis seems to converge more with the Grammarian philosophy of Sphoṭa than with any other exponent of this tradition.

Doctrine of eternality of Veda, speech and its meaning.

Vallabhite similarity with *Sphoṭavāda*.

While arguing against the Nyāya thesis that 'words' on the basis of experience are destructible, impermanent and non-eternal Puruṣottama contends [1] that the philosophy of the eternality and the permanence of 'speech' or 'word' is supported both by logic and scriptural-texts. Such scriptural-texts as "We heard that Veda is the self-born Nārāyaṇa himself", "The comprehension of the Śabda Brahman is extremely difficult", "Śiva and other deities, till the end of creation,

Puruṣottama's argument.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 20.

do not create but only remember it (the Veda)" and others establish without doubt that the ultimate nature of the Vedic-word along with its subsequent manifestations in the form of pronounced letters (vowels, consonants etc.) is eternal and immutable. The Nyāya objection that because we always perceive sound to be destructible and in need of human effort for pronunciation it is irrelevant to imagine that it can ever be eternal is answered by Puruṣottama on the basis of the famous *Āvirbhāva* and *Tirobhāva* theory. It is true that sounds and pronounced-letters appear to have a temporal existence where this idea of temporality is generated by the short-lived audition and experiencing of these 'sounds' and 'letters'. The Naiyāyika's real misapprehension is caused because of their conviction that each sound is separate and discrete and is not supported by any ground-principle. But the truth, as Puruṣottama asserts, is otherwise. The eternal Word, the Veda or the Śabda Brahman is the ground on which these innumerable sounds and ejaculated-letters are manifested and concealed. When the conditions requisite for the manifestation of *śabda* in a particular sound-form are fulfilled we have its manifestation and subsequent perception; as against this, when the conditions for its concealment become predominant the 'sound-form' vanishes from perceptual-range. Thus, the temporal and destructible perception of 'sound' and 'letters' is no valid reason for disparaging and denouncing the philosophy of the eternal and the divine character of the 'Word'. The whole confusion in the minds of the opponents of this theory is caused by their inadvertent identification of *Śabda* or Word with '*dhvani*' or uttered-sounds where they lose the sense of difference between them. Whereas the *dhvani* or sound is only a manifested form, the Word in its ultimate nature is identical with *Śabda Brahman* and is the transcendental synthesis and harmony of the discrete, differentiated, ejaculated sounds or the *dhvanis*.

Refutation of Nyāya.

Puruṣottama [1] endeavours to explain how Brahman, the ultimate inherent and instrumental cause of cosmic-creation manifests Itself in the form of *nāda* or the verbal ground of all physical sounds. Originally this *nāda* or 'speech' was in an unmanifested state (*avyakta*); subsequently, it underwent a process of manifestation by first acquiring the subtle

Manifestation of Nāda and the Vedas.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 20.

manomaya form in which the various [1] *varṇas* (letters) subsisted only in a state of 'thought' or 'conception' and then obtaining their gross forms as pronounced-letters, when they were ejaculated by Brahmā, gaining their present form as the Veda. The Vedas are thus the gross manifestations of the *Nāda* or the eternal Speech represented by the term '*sphoṭa*' The same *Nāda* or *Sphoṭa* manifests itself in the four levels of Divine [2] Speech i.e., the *parā*, *paśyanti*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* at the four astral centres of the *suṣmanā-path*, viz., the *Mūlādhāra*, the heart, the throat and the mouth respectively. When Śabda Brahman or Veda is differentiated in such forms as the 'pronounced-letters', the 'word' and the 'sentences', these ejaculated forms subsist in a relation of identity and difference; just as the three attributes of Brahman, viz., 'existence', 'consciousness' and 'bliss' are identical with Him notwithstanding their separate manifestations, the pronounced-letters of the *vaikharī*-level of speech, i.e., the letters, the word and the sentence are one and identical with Śabda Brahman or the manifested form of Veda which in its ultimate state is the *Nāda* or *Sphoṭa*. The *Nāda*, the original form and ground of speech, as explained by Puruṣottama, being ultimately identical with Brahman is invested with His six divine attributes (*dharmas*), viz., pervasiveness (*vyāpakatva*), subtleness (*sūkṣmatva*), eternality (*nityatva*), limitedness (*paricchinatva*), infinity of form (*anantarūpatva*) and plurality of form (*bahurūpatva*). The presence of such contradictory attributes in *Nāda* as pervasiveness and limitedness is reconciled in Vāllabha philosophy by their famous doctrine that Brahman is the substrate of contradictory attributes. This clearly explains the Vallabhite thesis that Word or Veda in its ultimate nature is eternal and indestructible, a theory that has the reverberations of the Mīmāṁsā and the Sphoṭavāda of Bhartṛhari and Maṇḍana.

The four levels of Divine Speech.

In tackling the next problem of the nature of 'meaning' and its relation to 'Word', the Vallabhites, notwithstanding their conformity with the Mīmāṁsist approach against the upbraidings of Nyāya and the Buddhist schools, have exhibited their disfavour and

Meaning and its relation to word.

1. *Ibid.*
2. Sa eṣa jīvaḥ vivaraprasūtiḥ prāṇena ghoṣeṇa guhāṁ praviṣṭaḥ (*Srībhāgavata*, śloka XI, 12, 17)

dissimilarity with the Mīmāṁsā treatment at several points. They refuted not only the naturalistic thesis of the conventional and purely arbitrary character of 'meaning' but also criticised the Nyāya philology that the meaning of a 'word' is always related to the object with the consequence that "a 'word' may have different meanings according to the different ways in which it may be related to an object".[1] The Naiyāyikas classify this relation as *abhidhā*, *paribhāṣa* and *lakṣanā* in which *abhidhā*, the direct relation between the word and its meaning, is alone supposed to contain an eternal relation between the word and its meaning, This eternal relation is an inherent potency of the word, e.g., 'jar' (*ghaṭa*) and the object called 'jar'. "The Naiyāyikas maintain that the eternal *śakti* is due to God's Volition which ordained that the particular fixed order of letter sound-*ghaṭa*-should mean the object now called *ghaṭa*. Thus for the Naiyāyikas, the meaning of a word even at its most primary level is judged to be conventional and not natural as maintained by the Schools of Brahmanical tradition, especially the Mīmāṁsā."[2]

The Nyāya position.

In Mīmāṁsā, the 'word', its 'meaning' and the relation between these two is contemplated to be unborn, eternal and beyond 'convention'. As explained by Śabara, each word is a verbal unit composed of several letters whose denotation is "brought about by the last component letter along with the impressions of each of the preceding component letters." The experience of the presence and absence of a word, e.g., pot (*ghaṭa*) in human consciousness causing the notion of its impermanence, is explained by the Mīmāṁsakas against the backgound of their theory of Word as eternal, infallible and *apauruṣeya* (impersonal). According to them, each pronounced word only manifests or reveals the already existent word. To quote Dr. Coward, "When the sound of the spoken word is no longer heard, this is not due to any destruction of the 'word' itself; rather, it is a case of non-perception of the word which remains eternally persent."[3] To the question as to what is actually denoted by a 'word' whether the universal (e.g., the

The Mīmāṁsā standpoint.

1. Coward, H.G. : *The Sphoṭa Theory of Language*, p. 58.
2. *Ibid*, p. 59.
3. *Ibid*, p. 38.

class of 'cow') or the particular (i.e., a particular cow possessing its special characteristics) the Mīmāṁsakas reply that it is the universal and not the particular that is denoted by a word; the word 'cow' denotes not the special characteristic of a particular animal, the cow, but the class-character of the animal, the cow. It is through the 'universal' that the denotation of the 'particular' is brought about. In their refutation of the Nyāya theory of the generative character of meaning (*utpattiśīla*) the Mīmāṁsakas adopted a highly polemical approach and by exhausting the possibility of any of the four types of relations such as embrace (*saṁśleṣa*), identity (*tādātmya*), inherence (*samavāya*) and contact (*saṁyoga*) between the 'word' and its 'meaning', established the validity of the theory that 'meaning' of a 'word' is eternally and inherently related to it.

After quoting and critically examining the views of the opponents, Puruṣottama,[1] in deference to the Brahmanical tradition upholds the theory that the meaning of a 'word' is not a matter of arbitrary convention but is inherently contained in it. The relation between the 'word' and its 'meaning' is always eternal. Meaning of a 'word', as explained by Puruṣottama, is the inherent and the beginningless power of the 'word' by which it is capable (*anukūla*) of generating the experience or knowledge of the object. 'Meaning' thus is the potency (*śakti*) in words which is capable of conveying the meaning of these words. This word-potency is, however, different from the *āvirbhāva-śakti* which is at the back of all verbal manifestations of language; thus, word-potency which is always relative to its object is only an aspect of Brahman's ubiquitous power of manifestation or *āvirbhāva-śakti*. This meaning or the special potency of the words which is manifested by the Lord for the proper functioning of mundane life with its names and forms, the *nāmarūpalīlā*, is classified [2] into three categories, viz., *Mukhya* (Primary), *Gauṇī* (Secondary) and *Tātparya*.

The Primary meaning or the potency of a word is the indicative sense in which the word is used. "It is again of three kinds, (1) Conventional (*rūḍhi*) wherein the word directly refers to the object that it represents, e.g., '*maṇḍapa*' (a pavilion), (2) Etymological (*yogika*) wherein the potency belongs to the parts, as in word 'Mādhava' the

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 30.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 32.

letter 'Ma' means 'Lakṣmī' and 'dhava' means 'husband'; hence the word 'Mādhava' means the 'husband of Lakṣmī' and (3) Etymology and Convention (*yoga-rūḍhi*) as in the word '*paṅkaja*' meaning that it is produced out of the mud, i.e., lotus." [1] As per the Vallabhite interpretation, the conventional use of a word implies the contraction of its potency with regard to all other objects. In the case of the etymological usage the meaning is conceived on the basis of the potencies of its parts (*avayavaśakti*).

The *Gauṇī* or the secondary meaning of a 'word' is the indirect application of the word through the relation of *śakya*. This *Gauṇī* again is of two varieties [2] : (1) *phalalakṣanā* and (2) *gauṇī*. Where one is desirous of revealing meaning directly with a purpose, e.g., the sentence, 'There is tumult in the Ganges' referring to the tumult on the bank, there is *phalalakṣanā*; on the other hand, when the relation of *śakya* is established on the basis of similarity (*sādṛśya*) the secondary meaning is said to be *gauṇī*. The third variety [3] of *padaśakti* expressing meaning, viz., *Tātparya*, occurs there where the word is pronounced with the specific desire of experiencing the object of its reference. Though a word may be used in different ways as per requirement in daily life, there are normally only six philological means of conveying meaning or the potencies of the word viz., Conventional, etymological, both conventional and etymological, *phalalakṣanā*, *gauṇī* and *tātparya*, as narrated above.

Vallabhite theory that word is related to both the universal and particular.

The problem as to what exactly is denoted by a 'word', whether the 'universal' or the 'particular', is solved by the Vallabhites by taking a stand which is in utter disagreement with the Mīmāṁsā and the Advaita Vedānta theory that the 'word' actually denotes the 'universal' and it is only through it that the particular is denoted. They emphatically assert that because the idea of the universal itself is impossible without the particular no relation of the 'word' and its object or 'meaning' [4] is conceivable via the universal or the class-concept.

1. Mishra, Umesha : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 20.
   Here the Vallabhite treatment is quite similar to that of Nimbārka.
2. Gauṇī api dvidhā phalalakṣanāgauṇībhedāt. (*Prasthānaratnākra*, p. 32)
3. Tātparyaṁ ca tatpratītīcchayā uccāritatvaṁ. (*Ibid*, p. 33).
4. *Ibid*, p. 25.

A 'word' is related to its 'object' invariably in its particular aspect also, with specific attributes and relations, along with its association with its class-concept or the universal. Just as in ocular perception the eye apprehends the *jāti* (universal) of the manifested form and colour along with it, a 'word' is also related both to the particular and the universal aspects of its object. The lurking fear in the Mīmāṁsaka's mind that because the particular aspect of an 'object' is always non-eternal it would also lead to the non-eternality of the relation between the 'word' and its 'meaning' if the theory of the particular's denotability is acknowledged is without any foundation and is based on a serious misunderstanding about the real nature of the particular as an existent. All *ādhibhautika padārthas*, as referred to in the Vedas, being the parts or locational manifestations of Puruṣa or the Divine Person are as eternal as the Divine Truth itself. Because all objects to which the words refer are the manifestations of the Ultimate Truth or God, the Vedas in their entirety with all their words and sentences refer only to Him: it is our phenomenal ignorance that conceives of a 'particular-manifestation' in isolation of the Divine Background, as destructible and non-eternal. The particular in Vallabhite philosophy is as eternal and everlasting as the Ultimate Reality itself. The realized saints in their beatific visions are always aware of this truth, and to them every objective existent of this manifested universe, in its diverse names and forms, is always eternal. However, to the ordinary mortals of this earth with their partial, ignorant and non-integral mentality and vision, the objects may appear destructible yet their continued recurrence in time assigns them *pravāha-nityatva* or the eternality of the stream or flux. Thus the Vallabhites argue that in every case, whether from the point of view of the highest knowledge or from the standpoint of ignorance or the lower level of knowledge the eternality of 'objects' is indubitable.

The status and relation of *varṇa, pada* and *vākya*.

Another important problem that has exercised the mind's of Indian thinkers in their treatment of the philosophy of language is the status and relation of the pronouced letters (*varṇa*), words (*pada*) and sentence (*vākya*) in the fuller and the final comprehension of meaning. The Nyāya philosophers had averred that the *varṇas* by their arrangement in a fixed order form a *pada* (word) and these 'words' when arranged in a fixed continuity produce a sentence. The unity of the various letters, psycho-

The Nyāya theory.

logically, is caused by memory, whereas, the meaning of the 'word' is always conventional, whether the convention be human or Divine. The real unit of *śabda* is the *pada* or 'word' because it alone, according to Naiyāyikas, has been privileged to acquire potency or '*padaśakti*'. The words when arranged in order according to *ākāṅkṣā* (longing to get meaning), *yogyatā* (capacity to accomplish the act), *āsatti* (nearness) and *tātparya* (intention of the speaker) form a sentence (*vākya*) which expresses the thought and the idea of the speaker in full.

Mīmāṁsā and Advaita Vedānta position.

The Mīmāṁsakas and the Vedāntins, acknowledge the truth of Nyāya approach that 'word' is the real unit of 'meaning' and a 'sentence', which is only an arrangement of words, acquires 'meaning' only through them. A human sentence, which is set out to have a beginning in time, may be open to the charge of destructibility but it would be futile to attribute destructibility to Vedic sentences which being *apauruṣeya* are as eternal as the 'words' themselves. Thus there is no ground for inconsistency in admitting a word, which is eternal in nature, as the ultimate unit of meaning. As asserted by Kumārila, a sentence has no meaning of its own, independent of words. On hearing a sentence, the word-meanings are related on the basis of syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*), fitness (*yogyatā*) and proximity (*sannidhi*). The resulting sentence-meaning is something more than just the sum of the word-meanings. Kumārila's *Abhihitānvaya* theory defends the eternality of the sentence by showing how its meaning arises from the juxtaposition of words, words which are eternal in nature. Kumārila as well as the Advaitins opposed Prabhākara's ingenuity in explaining that the meaning of a sentence is always relative to its being expressive of some kind of action whether injunctive (*vidhi*) or prohibitive (*niṣeda*) and all other sentences are meaningless and *arthavādas* (the *Anvitābhidhāna-theory*). To them nouns as well as verbs have eternal denotation and as such those sentences that are mere statements of facts or are denotative of reality are equally 'meaningful'. Such Vedic-sentences that explain a philosophical truth are as much meaningful as an injunctive or a prohibitive sentence.

Puruṣottama after reviewing the various theories of the different philosophical systems in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, declares [1] that all

1. Tena trayāṇāṁ nityatvādikamapi nirbādhameva. (*Ibid*, p. 25).

The Vallabhite position.

the three aspects of 'speech', viz., the letters (varṇa), the word (*pada*) and the sentence (*vākya*) are equally eternal and, therefore, meaningful in every respect. However, it is the sentence, which is an assemblage of words, that is expressive of a fuller and complete meaning though it would be illogical to conceive of it in isolation of the words. In reality, the sentence is always inseparable from its words that form the essential terms of its meaning. He, therefore, asserts that the letters, the words and the sentences, each of which is eternal for being the manifestation of Brahman in His Vedātmaka-form, is pregnant with and expressive of meaning. The very idea of allocating more or less significance to any one of them is irrelevant and meaningless. In Vallabhite speculation both the impartial (*akhaṇḍa*) and the partial (consisting of parts) aspects of *Śabda* are recognized on the basis of the doctrine of *Viruddhadharmāśrayatva*. Every sentence spoken by us is, in reality, an utterance of God Who in His Divine Sport speaks them through us. Therefore, all sentences, be they *vaidika* or *laukika* (mundane), are the sentences of God. But such a theory would mean a complete annulment of the distinction between 'valid' and 'invalid' and might just prove that all erroneous judgements, being sentences spoken by God, are also absolutely valid. The Vallabhites ward off this difficulty by asserting that though the whole of language is a manifestation and *vikṛti* of 'Om', the ultimate[1] *śabda*, the inherent validity of a sentence is vitiated by the association of such human defects as delusion (*bhrama*), mental laziness (*pramāda*) infatuation (*vipralipsā*) and inefficacy of senses (*karaṇāpāṭava*). It is due to the association of the defects, that are naturally associated with every human judgement, that the inherently valid sentence is converted into an invalid and erroneous judgement. In His Divine Sport the Lord contracts or conceals the other meaning of a 'word' and manifests only that which is used in ordinary mundane parlance thus creating a distinction between the meanings of different 'words', 'letters' and 'sentences' for *vyavahāra* or mundane usage. All words or sentences are, in reality, propelled by God's volition and they ultimately refer to Him indirectly through the innumerable names and forms by which He phenomenalizes Himself. The Vedas and the *Śabda* through their inherent potency ultimately describe Brahman and His Sport in various ways.

1. *Ibid*, p. 28.

This linguistic analysis of *śabda* or 'speech' not only establishes the eternal, non-contradicted and self-valid character of the Vedas but also enjoins that 'speech' as such, at its phenomenal level, has its meaning in God. The realised saints who have acquired an integral vision of the Ultimate Reality are well acquainted with this truth but the ignorant men of the world, on account of their association with such defects as delusion, inattentiveness, proneness to deception and want of proper functioning of sense-organs are unable to realise this truth.

All sentences of the Vedas have equal validity.

An important question that crops up is whether all Vedic words and sentences are equally valid or not. Prabhākara had stressed that only the injunctive and prohibitive sentences necessitating activity (*karma*) on the part of the doer are only meaningful though Kumārila and the Vedāntins confuted this by claiming equal validity and meaningfulness even for the statements of fact or judgements of truth; Śaṁkara, however, asserted that the *nirguṇa-śrutis* have a superior validity in comparison to other *śrutis*, e.g. the *saguṇa* ones. Vallabha himself was in total disagreement with any attempt at twisting either the meaning or the equal validity of the Vedic-words. To him all Vedic-words, sentences, *arthavādas*, in both the *Karma-kāṇḍa* and the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* portions of the Vedas, are equally valid and there is no justification in considering the one as primary and the other as secondary. The Vedas as a whole including the Saṁhitas, the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads, i.e., both the *Karma-kāṇḍa* and the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* should be thoroughly studied for obtaining a proper insight into the ultimate nature of Truth. To Vallabha the *Karma-mīmāṁsā* is not antagonistic to *Jñāna-mīmāṁsā*[1] as supposed by Śaṁkara; in truth, the two Mīmāṁsas are complementary and mutually helpful.

(d) The Smṛtis

The nature of Smṛti.

Smṛtis are defined as those scriptural texts that contain the teachings of the seers based on the memory of their realization and experience of the Truth revealed by the Vedas. Almost all the Brahmanical systems of Indian Philosophy are in agreement about the validity of Smṛti yet which of the Smṛtis should be taken to be valid has been a point of acrimonious debate.

1. *Tattvadīpanibandha, Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, with *Prakāśa*, karika 7, p. 27.

The valid *Smṛtis*

Vallabha, like Śaṁkara, Madhva, Rāmanuja, and others, contended that the basic principle behind the validity of the *Smṛtis* is their consonance and agreement with the teachings of the Vedas and on this basis he, like other Vaiṣṇavites, repudiated the claim of the *Pāśupata* and *Śaiva-Smṛtis* to self-validity. All *Smṛtis* should not be taken to be equally valid and correct representations of the teachings of the Vedas for the simple reason that besides their apparent antagonism they being dependent on the memories of their human authors are likely to be affected by the defects of false knowledge and misrepresentation which are not unlikely for persons of limited intelligence. Thus, according to Vallabha and his followers, there are certain *Smṛtis* that are to be accepted in toto for example the *Bhagavadgītā*[1]; there are others that are to be totally rejected, for example, the Pāśupata-Smṛtis. Besides these, the partial validity of some of the *Smṛtis* such as the *Akṣapāda* and the *Kaṇāda Smṛtis* may be accepted in so far as those parts are in agreement with the Vedic teachings because when there is a contradiction between the *śruti* and the *smṛti* it is the *śruti* alone which has a stronger validity. The Vallabhites thus aver that the conversational portions of the *Vālamīki-Rāmayaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*[2] being *samādhi-bhāṣā* are self-valid. They too like Akṣapāda and Kaṇāda *smṛtis* contain portions that may be partly invalid.

The *Bhagavadgītā* being the teachings and instructions of the Lord Himself is as valid as the Vedas yet it is included under[3] *smṛtis* because during the course of the Mahābhārata war Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is Himself the source and the cause of the Vedas, recollected the truth of the Vedas and then taught them of Arjuna, his disciple. Thus each word of this sacred scripture is absolutely self-valid without any possibility of contradiction with the Aupaniṣadika or the Vedic teaching.

Besides the *smṛtis*, the *Brahmasūtras* of Vyāsa[4] and such Purāṇas as the *Bhāgavata* should also be treated as valid scriptures for they are, as the Vallabhites contend, the expositions of the teachings

1. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārika 7 with *Prakāśa*.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 35 to 36.
3. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra, (1, 2, 6).
4. The Pūrva Mīmāṁsā Sūtras of Jaimini being complementary to Vedānta are also included under valid scriptures.

of Vyāsa himself to whom all truth was ever-revealed. Yet the whole of the *Śrī Bhāgavata* is not self-valid; it is only the *samādhi-bhāṣā*[1] portion that has a claim to validity. Besides the *Bhāgavata*, the *Garuḍa-purāṇa* the *Padma*, the *Vārāha* and a few others may also be recognized as sacred scriptures.

It is a chastened Vallabhite position that of all the various means of cognition, the testimony, i.e., the Vedas, are the only supreme authority that can impart knowledge about the transcendental Ultimate Truth; all other sacred scriptures are valid only because they unmistakenly reproduce the revelation of the Vedic truth and teachings. Brahman, as the *śruti* instructs, is knowable only through the Upaniṣads (*taṁ tu aupaniṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ pṛcchāmī*). When, however, there is a doubt about a Vedic instruction, it should be resolved on the basis of the *Bhagavadgītā*.[2] If there is no satisfaction, one should try to understand it by a study of the *Brahmasūtra* and in case the doubt still persists one should take recourse to the *Bhāgavata*, whose repeated study is sure to dispel all darkness from the innermost recesses of a doubting soul. Thus, in Vallabhite philosophy there are four canons of scriptural testimony, viz., the Vedas, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhāgavata*. The Vedas are self-evident, eternal and absolute (*nirapekṣa*) not only because they are *śabda* but because they have the inherent strength and capacity to reveal the supernatural, spiritual, transcendent and transcendental Truth; with regard to this truth they are the only *pramāṇa*. Śrī Vallabha was a great votary of the Hindu exegetic argument and belief that all the four canons of authority inclusive of the *Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā-sūtra* are mutually harmonious and reveal only one object, the Brahman or the Ultimate Reality. All other instructions and scriptural-texts that present views contradictory to these should be treated as false and invalid and worthy to be rejected.

The four canons of authority.

Thus to Vallabha and his followers there are only three valid means of knowledge, viz., the *śabda* (testimony), perception and inference. Out of these the first, i.e., the *śabda* alone is instrumental

1. Those expressions of the *Bhāgavata* in which Vyāsa has described the Truth as revealed to him during *samādhi* are known as *samādi-bhāṣā*.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 21 with *Prakāśa*.

in imparting [1] valid instructions about the nature of Ultimate Reality and other transcendent matters, whereas the other two, viz., 'perception' and 'inference' have their operation and validity only within the range and compass of *vyavahāra*. Though *Śrībhāgavata* lends recognition to a fourth *pramāṇa*, namely, *Aitihya*, Puruṣottama [2] thinks that it would be proper to include it under 'testimony'. Aitihya is said to be operative in such cases where knowledge is acquired by tradition and the real agent remains unknown, for example, the knowledge that 'there resides a Yakṣa in this Banyan tree'. Now this type of knowledge may be either true or false. If it is false it is not a *pramāṇa* at all; if it is true, it is only a case of *śabda* or verbal-testimony. Puruṣottama, therefore, argues that knowledge by oral-tradition or *Aitihya* is not a separate *pramāṇa* but only a variety of *śabda*. The Vallabhites do not discard the validity of Aitihya; they simply reject its claim to a separate and novel means of cognition.

Aitihya.

The other three means of cognition, viz., *Upamāna* (Analogy), *Arthāpatti* (Implication) and *Anupalabdhi* (non-apprehension) as recognized in **Bhaṭṭa-Mīmāṁsā** and Advaita Vedānta have also been criticised and denounced by Puruṣottama [3] in his *Prasthānaratnākara*. We have already discussed the refutation of *Anupalabdhi* while explaining the Vallabhite theory of the perception of non-existence. We, however, endeavour to discuss, in short, the Vallabhite criticism of *Upamāna* and *Arthāpatti* before moving on to the next important problem of the validity of knowledge.

(e) Denunciation of Upamāna and Arthāpatti

The philosophical systems of Nyāya, Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta described *Upamāna* or Analogy as knowledge generated through the medium of the concept of similarity notwithstanding their difference in explicating the process of the operation of this *pramāṇa*. For example, Vedānta defined *Upamāna* as a means of the cognition of similarity of an object which is not within the purview of the operation of senses at that moment. When a man who has seen a cow

Denunciation of Upamāna.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 36.
2. *Ibid*, p. 52.
3. *Ibid*, p. 51 to 53.

in the city, and being instructed by a reliable man that a *gavaya* is like a cow, goes to the forest and sees a wild *gavaya* (a species of ox), he recognizes the similarity of the cow in the *gavaya* and, thereafter obtains the knowledge that the *gavaya* is similar to the cow. This posterior cognition of the similarity of the cow in the *gavaya* is said to be the result of the operation of *Upamāna*. The whole process of the apprehension in this example consists of two cognitions of similarity : (1) that of the cow in the *gavaya* and (2) that of the *gavaya* in the cow. The first cognition of the similarity of the cow in the *gavaya* is stated to be the result of the operation of perception because the substrate of similarity in this case, i.e., the *gavaya,* comes directly in contact with the eye. But because the cow in the second cognition of similarity is not an [1] object of sense-contact it cannot be apprehended through perception. This cognition of similarity is also not caused by inference since there is no operation of *vyāpti* in this case and as such a separate *pramāṇa* for this purpose is essential. This *pramāṇa* is named '*Upamāna*'.

The Nyāya explanation of this *pramāṇa* is somewhat different. According to them, "When a man of the city who has never seen a wild ox (*gavaya*) goes to the forest, asks a forester — 'What is a *gavaya*?', the forester replies — 'Oh! you do not know it, it is just like a cow': after hearing this from the forester he travels on, and on seeing a *gavaya* and finding it to be similar to a cow he forms the opinion that this is a *gavaya.*" [2] This knowledge caused through the medium of similarity and on the basis of the reliable instruction of the person (of the city) is, therefore, a separate *pramāṇa* named *Upamāna* or Analogy which is defined as the knowledge of the relation between a 'noun' and the person or thing denoted by it [3] (*saṁjñā-saṁjñi-sambandha*). The main instrument of this *pramāṇa* is the knowledge of similarity and the memory of the instruction — from the reliable person — is its internal operation (*avāntaravyāpāra*).

Puruṣottama in his refutation of Analogy has principally its Nyāya rendering and interpretation in mind where the relation of the 'noun' and its 'object' is supposed to be caused by the memory of the instructed sentence and the similarity suggested by it. As contended by him, because 'similarity' (*sādṛśya*) is not a separate category — as

1. *Sāṁkhyatattvakaumudī*, p. 14.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 354.
3. *Tarka-saṁgraha*, upainana Pariccheda, p. 126.

conceived in the systems of Nyāya, Mādhva Vedānta and others — it is illogical to conceive of a separate means (*pramāṇa*) for the generation of its knowledge. It would be quite proper to formulate it as one of the types of *mānas-pratyakṣa*. Thus when the instructed-sentence is brought to memory there is the simultaneous recollection of 'similarity' between the 'cow' (*go*) and the 'ox' (*gavaya*) and the object presented to eye (i.e., the *gavaya*) is recognized as as *gavaya*. This process of cognition in volves the operation of testimony or verbal knowledge of the instructed-sentence through the medium of the latent traces (*saṁskāras*) of the similarity between the 'cow' and the 'ox' resulting in mental or subjective identity of the term or the 'word' and the object of perception. Analogy which [1] is only the cognition of the relation between the noun and its object through the operation of eye as the sense-organ and the assistance of the memory of 'similarity' and 'the instructed-sentence' can be conveniently included within 'perception'. But the opponent may argue that the theory of Analogy as a variety of perception may lead to the conclusion that it is a kind of immediate knowledge [2] and not meditate. The Vallabhites are, however, not chary of this situation; they will be willing to treat 'analogy' as a case of immediate-perception without any compunction for shedding off its mediacy.[3]

Here we may be allowed a little digression to consider the Vallabhite opinion on the question of the psychological genesis of the knowledge of similarity. Viśvanātha Pañcānana, the author of *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvalī* while explaining 'similarity' stressed the importance of the perception of several attributes between the two objects involving the relation of similarity, e.g., when the 'cow' is said to be similar to the 'ox' it means it has several attributes like colour, movement, possession of four legs etc. which are also present in the '*gavaya*'. Puruṣottama, however, disagrees and contends that even the perception of one attribute is sufficient to generate the cognition of similarity; as such, the emphasis on the perception of several attributes is absolutely redundant. By perceiving the presence of even one quality

1. Upamānaṁ tu na mānāntaraṁ sādṛśyātideśavākyārthasmaraṇasaḥkāreṇa cakṣurādinaiva sajñāsamjñipariccheḍopapattau. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 5).
2. *Ibid*, p. 51.
3. This theory of Analogy as a kind of 'perception' is dissimilar to the Rāmānujite and the Mādhva interpretation where it is treated as a kind of inference.

of 'ordinary water' in the 'the water of the Ganges' one can say that 'all water' is similar to the 'Ganges-water'.

Refutation of *Arthāpatti*.

Like Analogy the claim of *Arthāpatti* or Implication as a separate means of cognition acknowledged in the systems of Mīmāṁsā and Advaita Vedānta is also disparaged by Puruṣottama. Both Kumārila and the Śaṁkarites asserted that *Arthāpatti* consists in presuming something not seen or known on the ground that a fact already seen or heard cannot be explained without it. For instance, when it is found that Devadatta, who is alive is not in the house, it then leads to the implication or presumption that he is somewhere outside the house. It is the certainty about his being alive together with the perception of his absence from the house that leads us to the presumption of his outside existence.

Dharmarājādhvarendra, in his *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, defined *arthāpatti* [1] as the imagining of a final or resultant judgement on the basis of another judgement which serves it as a cause. Without the presumption of this causal judgement or knowledge any final conviction and certainty about the resultant or effective knowledge is impossible. For example, when it is known that Devadatta who is quite healthy and fat does not eat during the day, then it is presumed that he eats during night. The implication of the knowledge that he eats during night is essential for explaining the truth of his sound health and vigorous body and is, therefore, a separate *pramāṇa*. The *arthāpatti-pramāṇa*, as contended by the author of *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*,[2] is of two kinds, viz., (1) *Dṛṣṭārthāpatti* (where the implication concerns perceptual cognition) and (2) *Śrutārthāpatti* (where the presumption is for explaining a heard or a verbal-truth). The implication of the falsity or *mithyātva* (which is absolutely non-existent) of 'silver' in the illusion of 'silver' in 'conch-shell' is an illustration of *Dṛṣṭārthāpatti*. On the other hand, when after hearing the verbal-instruction from the teacher that 'the knower of Ātman transgresses all sorrows' one cognizes the truth and validity of the judgement that 'sorrow' or 'bondage' is *mithyā* or unreal because the fact of its sublation by knowledge cannot be explained otherwise, it is an instance of *Śrutārthāpatti*, because

1. *Vedāntaparibhāṣa*, Chapter on Arthāpatti, p. 136.
2. *Ibid*, p. 137 to 139.

here the intention of the implication is to vouchsafe the truth and validity of a verbal-instruction.

Puruṣottama vehemently [1] opposed the contention of the proponants of Implication. He argued that because the author of *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* himself maintained that implication is only a kind of hypothesis or imagination (*kalpanā*) it is illogical to raise it to the status of *pramiti* or right-knowledge. The fact or the truth of Devadatta's healthy body may be explicable on other grounds also; it may be caused by dropsy or by eating rice cooked in milk. How can then the fact of 'his eating during night' be considered as a valid hypothesis for a satisfactory explanation of the judgement that 'Devadatta is fat and healthy'. Puruṣottama thus strikes at the root of the Vedāntic claim that *arthāpatti* is a novel and uncontradicted means of arriving at certain judgements that are otherwise inexplicable. He also criticises the two cases of *arthāpatti* and claims that they are nothing but instances of 'perception' and 'testimony' because they are simply utilized (as cause) to add to the conviction of their knowledge like repetition (abhyāsa); just as repetition has no claim to separate *pramāṇatā*, *arthāpatti* is also not a novel and separate means of cognition and can easily be construed under [2] 'perception' and 'testimony'; *dṛṣṭārthāpatti* is 'perception', whereas, *śrutārthāpatti* is an instance of verbal-cognition or *śabda*.

(G) THE VALIDITY OF KNOWLEDGE

The foregoing exposition of the various means of right knowledge naturally leads to the question : What is the guarantee that knowledge as affected by the operation of these *pramāṇas* is valid at all? In other words, how can one be sure that the knowledge, in reality, is illuminative of the real characters, specifications and form of its object? Does this certainty lie in the very nature of the produced knowledge itself or is it to be vouchsafed by future corroboration with other sources and conditions? This problem of the validity of knowledge, a cornerstone of Indian epistemological analysis, has been solved in the different philosophical systems by resorting to one of the four

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 52.
2. Here again the Vallabhites are opposed to Rāmānuja and Madhva who claim that *arthāpatti* is a kind of Inference.

alternative solutions. As observed by Mādhvācārya,[1] the Sāṁkhyas believe that both the validity and invalidity of knowledge is self-proved (*svataḥ*), the Naiyāyikas hold them to be known externally and through other sources; the Bauddhas think that 'invalidity' is self-evident whereas 'validity' is proved externally (*parataḥ*). Lastly, the teachers of Veda, that is the Mīmāṁsakas (both Pūrva and Uttara) maintain that *prāmāṇya* (validity) is self-proved but *aprāmāṇya* requires external proof. Of these, so far as the question of the validity of knowledge is concerned, the two dominant views proclaiming it to be either *svataḥ* or *parataḥ* advocated by the Mīmāṁsā and the Nyāya schools respectively, represented the whole gamut of arguments, standpoints and attributes put forward by India's philosophical genius.

The *Parataḥ-prāmāṇya* of Nyāya.

The Naiyāyikas argued, on this point, that since knowledge is generated by certain objective collocation of conditions,[2] its validity can be ascertained through its agreement with the objective facts of experience and its dependence on those conditions. According to them, these collocations [3] of conditions only assure the production of knowledge and not the validity of its correspondence with objective phenomena. If the generation of knowledge could certify its own validity then, possibly, there could be no error or illusion. It is, therefore, reasonable to assert that the validity or truth of knowledge depends on the fulfilment of our practical purposes or effective activity (*samartha-pravṛtti*) and as such knowledge should not be regarded as self-valid; the comprehension of the validity of a cognition which, according to Nyāya, is obtained through *Kevalavyatirekī* inference is, therefore, always *parataḥ* or through something else. Not only this, the judgement that a particular cognition is invalid has also to take recourse to the standard whether it possesses effective activity or not. Thus, not only the judgement about the validity of knowledge but also the judgement of its invalidity is also ***parataḥ.***

As opposed to the Naiyāyikas, the followers of the Vedas—the Mīmāṁsakas, the Advaitins and the Vaiṣṇavites of almost all the hues—

1. *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha*, p. 129.
   See also Mishra, U. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 513.
2. *Nyāyamañjarī*, p. 160 to 173.
3. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 373.

The Mīmāṁsā and the Vedānta doctrines of *Svataḥ-prāmāṇya.*

who recognize the status and glory of consciousness as a prius and foundation of all cognitive activity in the world dismiss the Nyāya theory as a mere hypothesis which can never be demonstrated by experience. the ordinary idea of causation as regulating the events of physical phenomena cannot be applied to knowledge which enjoys the special prerogative of illuminating itself and the objects of the world. Knowledge is unlike all other phenomena for it stands above them, illumines them all and in doing so carries with it the certainty of its revelation. The fact, according to Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta, is that the objective phenomena are dependent on knowledge for their manifestation and not that knowledge is caused or generated by them. The Nyāya conception of *parataḥ-prāmaṇya,* to them, is a sort of hysteron-proteron which misunderstands and misrepresents the fact of knowledge and derogates it from its unique status as a self-illuminating and foundational principle.

The Mīmāṁsaks vigorously upheld 'that the instrument of knowledge, through which a cognition is arrived at, should also prove the validity of that cognition without the help of any other agency',[1] i.e., the fact of the validity of a cognition should be deemed to be embedded in the inherent character of the cognition itself. Though the methodology of apprehending the self-validity of a cognition has been explained differently by Kumārila (through *jñānata*), Prabhākara (by asserting that the same thing that produces *jñāna* also produces its validity) and Murārī Miśra (by explaining that the validity of a cognition is apprehended through the *anuvyavasāya* or recognition of the first cognition) it is Prabhākara who through his doctrine of *triputīpratyakṣa* gives a faithful representation to the real upthrust of the *svataḥ-prāmāṇya* theory of knowledge.

The vindication of the conception of the self-validity of knowledge in the Schools of both the Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṁsās has always been a double approach; firstly, from the point of view of origin (*utpattau*) and, secondly, from the standpoint of the actual manifestation of knowledge or revelation (*jñaptau*). The conception of the self-validity of knowledge in its origin implies that knowledge is generated only by the conditions (*sāmagrī*) requisite for creating

1. Mishra, Umesha. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 517.

cognitions without the operation and existence of such conditions that are not required for the generation of knowledge; it is the presence of such extraneous and unnecessary conditions that invalidates the manifestation of knowledge. Every false and invalid knowledge consists in being vitiated by such conditions that are not essential for the production of knowledge. It is due to such defects that knowledge which, by nature, is self-valid becomes invalid. The Naiyāyikas, for example Udayana, objected against this contention by asserting that because the validity of knowledge is assured only when it is caused by conditions that determine the acquisition of knowledge the Mīmāṁsaka's or the Vedāntin's position would ultimately lead to *parataḥ-prāmāṇya-vāda*. Against this, the proponents of the doctrine of self-validity of knowledge argue that the necessary condition of the absence of defects is insufficient to establish the judgement that the validity of knowledge is *parataḥ* or extraneous. The validity of a cognition can be demonstrated to be *parataḥ* only when it depends on positive extraneous conditions and not on the denial of certain factors. The mere fact that the absence of defects is necessary for the validity of knowledge can in no way destroy its self-valid or self-evident character (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya*). Because the presence of defects is essential for invalidating a cognition, it is the invalidity of knowledge which should be treated as *parataḥ*. Validity of knowledge, from the standpoint of origin, for the followers of Veda is always *svataḥ*.

A similar treatment is also given to the problem of validity of cognitive manifestation both in the schools of Mīmāṁsā and the different offshoots of Vedānta. The Mīmāṁsakas who recognized the status of knowledge as the prius and the foundation of all facts of cognition and its *sui-generis* character averred 'that there is no intermediary link between the rise of knowledge and the revelation of objects on which knowledge depends for producing its action of revealing or illuminating them. Whenever there is any knowledge it carries with it the impression that it is certain and valid.'[1] According to Advaitins, the validity[2] of *jñapti* or the revelation of knowledge, which is a particular form of *antaḥkaraṇa-vṛtti*, is apprehended by the *sākṣin* along with the apprehension of the vṛtti-cognition. As the *sākṣin*

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 374.
2. *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* with the gloss *Arthadīpikā*, p. 155 to 156.

is the ultimate unifying principle which comprehends the form of *vṛttis*, it also apprehends the validity of cognition. The instrumentality of *sākṣin* in the apprehension of the validity of cognition is recognized in the Mādhva system as well, where it is asserted that the *sākṣin* possesses the unfailing power (*sahaja-śakti*) to[1] cognise and to comprehend the validity of knowledge that can be thwarted only by the presence of obstacles. Just as the natural heat of fire can be suspended through[2] the presence of mantras or *maṇi*, the natural capacity of the *sākṣin* to grasp the validity of knowledge can also be held in abeyance due to the presence of obstructions. Thus to the Madhvites also the flash of revelation, in an event of cognition, is absolutely self-evident and self-valid.

During our exposition of the Vallabhite nature of knowledge we have observed that this system too acknowledged the philosophy of the two levels of consciousness, the transcendental and the phenomenal (including the empirical). In its transcendental level, Consciousness, which is the very essence of Brahman, is immutable, primary and self-valid. The jīva or the individual-soul being the *aṁśa* (part) of Brahman possesses the same transcendental consciousness in its ultimate nature (*svarūpa*). Its consciousness which is identical with the Brahman's *cit* is always eternal, immutable, *sui-generis*, self-evident and self-illuminating. We have also observed that after the Lord's wish to manifest and phenomenalise that consciousness appears as an attribute both in Brahman and in the jīva and then it successively reaches a stage at which consciousness is phenomenalised to become empirical knowledge in its true sense. At the transcendental stage, consciousness or knowledge which is universal and integral is bereft of any possibility of invalidity; consciousness at this stage is absolutely self-illuminating and self-valid.

The real problem of validity or invalidity of knowledge arises at the stage when it comes down to phenomenalise itself and manifest in an empirical and discursive (*savikalpaka*) form. No empirical judgement, as the Vallabhites assert, can have any transcendental and absolute validity; it has only an empirical, pragmatic and relative validity. We have also observed that it is the influence of the attribute

1. *Tarka-tāṇḍava*, p. 4.
2. *Yuktimallikā*, śloka (II, 341).

of *rajas* that introduces the element of discursiveness and invalidity to an otherwise *sāttvika* knowledge which is indeterminate and self-valid. It is the element of *sattva* which, from the Vallabhite standpoint, is, by nature, manifestive of validity; the greater the element of *sattva-guṇa* in a cognition the greater is its claim to validity. Thus the Vallabhites aver that *sāttvika* knowledge is inherently and, by nature, self-valid; it is the association of the attributes of *rajas* and *tamas* that create the conditions for its invalidity. Vallabhism being an offshoot of the Vedavādins is emphatically assertive that knowledge, as pro-claimed and explained in Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta, is self-valid; that is, its validity is to be comprehended *svataḥ* and not *parataḥ*.

Puruṣottama in his *Prasthānaratnākara* [1] cursorily dispenses with the Śāṁkhya and the Nyāya theories on the problem of the validity of knowledge. He argues that the Sāṁkhya concept that both validity and invalidity are *svataḥ* is contradictory for knowledge, by nature, is incapable of demonstrating both the certitude and incertitude of the representation of its object. The Nyāya logic which maintains that both validity and invalidity are *parataḥ* is equally specious because prior to the apprehension of the qualities [2] (*guṇas*) and defects (*doṣa*) of the causes responsible for the generation of knowledge it would be almost impossible to realize whether knowledge belongs to the category of *pramāṇa* (right knowledge) or *apramāṇa* (invalid knowledge). After citing the viewpoints of both the Kumārila and the Prabhākara Schools of Mīmāṁsā, he acknowledges the validity of *svataḥ-prāmāṇya-vāda;* yet he issues a warning that treating every kind of empirical judgement as inherently valid would be incongruous and against the dictates of experience. There are certain judgements that exhibit their dependence on some of the prior judgements on the basis of similarity in which memory plays a dominant role. Such judgements should be excluded from the purview of the doctrine of the self-validity of knowledge for in their case the validity is really *parataḥ* and not *svataḥ*. As remarked by Prof. Dasgupta, "Puruṣottama thinks that in some cases where knowledge is due to accessory influence of memory its validity is not spontaneous but is to be derived only through corraborative sources, whereas there may be other cases where knowledge may be

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 53.
2. *Ibid*, p. 53.

self-valid."[1] The Vallabhite theory on the question of the validity of knowledge is, as admitted by Puruṣottama himself, is like a woman who is half young and half old; the real correct answer to this problem is to acknowledge that though knowledge is inherently self-valid yet where it is caused and is under the influence of memory its validity should be decided only after corroborating its revelations with other extraneous evidences, conditions and facts of knowledge because dependence on memory [2] and the *past-saṁskāras* very often leads not only to ineffective activity but to delusion also.

(H) SCRIPTURAL TESTIMONY AND REASON

Different *pramāṇas* have different fields of operation.

Before ending this discussion and account of the *pramāṇas* it may be worthwhile to assess the function and significance of each one of them and mark the fields of their operation. It is a point generally acceptable to almost all the Indian thinkers that the recognition of a particular *pramāṇa* in a system of philosophy has its reason in its utility for generating knowledge of a particular class of object out of a whole gamut of cognita. Not only this, the particular *pramāṇa* is in all probability the only means of knowing the particular class of object. The object of 'perception' in general is not known through 'inference' the 'fire in the hill' or any such object which is not immediately present to the senses would remain unknown if the services of 'inference' (*anumāna*) are not utilized; even in 'perception' the different objects that enter into sense-object-relationship are cognisable only by that particular sense with which it, by its inherent nature, is contacted- fragrance is perceived only by 'nose' and 'colour' by eye alone. Vallabha and his followers understand and appreciate the merit of this argument and assign different regions of objectivity, to their three kinds of pramāṇas, viz., Testimony (*śabda*), Perception (*pratyakṣa*) and Inference (*anumāna*).

Scriptural Testimony or the Veda with its associates (the *Bhagvadgītā*, the *Brahmasūtra* and the *smṛtis* dependent on the Vedas) is considered in the Vallabhite Philosophy to be the supreme and the

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 346.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 53.

Ultimate Reality knowable through Scriptural Testimony alone.

most important of all the *pramaṇas* for the simple reason that it is through it alone that the Ultimate Truth, the transcendent verities and the transcendental principles can be disclosed to a human mind. Whatever else may be an apple of discord between Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Vallabha, they display a unique approach of uniformity when they claim with one voice that the nature of Truth is comprehensible only through *Śabda* or Scriptural Testimony and not through any other *pramāṇa*; in other words, all other *pramāṇas*, whether perception or inference have no locus standi vis-a-vis the supernatural and the transcendent aspect of Truth. The argument for such a contention is that because 'perception' refers only to phenomenal and manifested aspect of Brahman and 'inference' needs some sign (*hetu*) and the relation of *vyāpti* both of them are only *laukika-pramāṇas* incapable of supplying [1] any knowledge about Brahman, His nature and attributes etc.

In his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha asks the Advaitin whether the nature of Brahman [2] is knowable through *śrutis* (the Vedas) or through any of the *laukika-pramāṇas*. According to him, the second alternative is impossible because the *laukika-pramāṇa* can be either 'perception', 'inference', '*śabda*' or '*upamāna*', all of which are miserably ineffectual in providing even a glimmer about the real nature of Truth. In order that Brahman be cognisable by 'perception' It should be the object of any of the five cognitive senses. For ocular and tactual perceptions It must possess some physical form but because Brahman is known to be a Form-less Substance there is hardly any possibility of Its becoming an object to any of the five kinds of cognitive senses. Again because Brahman is formless and attributeless (in Advaitic philosophy) it is impossible to find a *hetu* for comprehending Its real character; thus 'inference' is also out of question. Śabda being a kind of testimony requiring the perception of the object by the *āptapuruṣa* is also ineffective because Brahman, as per the Advaitins own position, is incognisable (*adṛśyatvāt*); thus the *śabda*, in this particular sense, is not a proper instrument for Brahman's knowledge. Upamāna or Analogy

1. Pūrvoktāni eva vyavāhare pramāṇāni, paramārthe tu śabda eveti siddhaṁ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 53).
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 75 to 76.

too is a dismal failure because Brahman being One and that too attributeless there is no ground for establishing any relation on the basis of similarity. Viṭṭhalanātha, therefore, concludes that the real nature of Brahman is accessible only through *śrutis* as mentioned in the *Upaniṣad*, 'I enquire about that Aupaniṣada Puruṣa.' [1] But he warns that the real meaning of the *śrutis* should not be comprehended by ordinary, mundane methodology; instead, it should be based on Vyāsa's *Brahmasūtra*. So a man desirous of acquiring knowledge about the real nature of Truth and solving the riddle of universe must learn the Scriptures (*śāstras*) and comprehend the meaning of the *śrutis* by serving as pupil of some traditional master (*guru*) belonging to the Uttara-Mīmāṁsā system. It is only then that the thick veil of ignorance obstructing his knowledge can be rented. Vallabha is, therefore, unequivocal in his asserting, like other commentators of Vedānta, that in supernatural [2] and transcendent matters *śruti* or *Śabda* is the only valid means of cognition; the other two *pramāṇas*, viz., perception and inference are *laukika-pramāṇas* and indubitably refer to natural, empirical or phenomenal aspect of Reality. The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* emphasized in no uncertain terms that *Śāstra* is the only means of acquiring knowledge about Brahman (*śāstrayonitvāt*) and undertook the task of explaining the real meaning and import of the *śrutis* by allaying all possible doubts on different subjects. The philosophical schools that follow the *Brahmasūtra* or the Uttara Mīmāṁsā — tradition have absolutely no qualms about the basic and the fundamental principle that Vedas alone, that are self-valid, and unrelated to any other means of cognition (*nirapekṣa*) are capable of revealing the Truth and removing all darkness from the human hearts and mind.

Scriptural testimony vis-a-vis reason and Intellect.

With such systems where revelation is a method of philosophising, the modern mind with a rationalistic temper and a pretending scientific approach may feel aghast at the degradation of Resaon and Intellect and an unnecessary elevation of Authority reminiscent of Christian theological approach during the Middle Ages. Has reason no place and function in determining the nature of things and Reality? Vallabha, in his *Aṇubhāṣya*, clearly

1. Taṁ tu aupaniṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ pṛcchāmi.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 1, 27).

explains his position when he writes; "Therefore,[1] *pramāṇa* (meaning scripture) alone is to be followed, not logic (*yukti*); what is of primary importance is that the enquiry should always be based on scripture because as the *śruti* remarks, 'this knowledge cannot be obtained through logic."[2] A sceptic would, however, read through these lines the irrational upbraidings of a misologist who has no place for Reason in his system while laying the solid foundations for dogmatic Faith. Dr. W.S. Urquhart whose missionary zeal and ecclesiastical enthusiasm never allowed him to have a correct vision of the Vedāntic position wrote about Śāṁkara, whose standpoint in this regard is identical with that of Vallabha: "Śaṁkara's apparent abdication of private judgement, his reliance on instruction imparted by another, and his abhorrence of unfettered thought are disconcertingly suggestive of the narrowness of the European Medieval Philosophy and seems to place a chasm between Vedāntic and modern speculation."[3] A charge similar to this in spirit is levelled by Dr. H. V. Glasenapp when he writes against Vallabha, "In a high measure than many other systems it is in itself a theological system and not philosophical one, because it expressly considers the holy scriptures as important *pramāṇa* (śabda eva pramāṇaṁ)."[4]

These criticisms and many others which embody an unfettered faith in the capacity of human reason for gauging the unfathomable and secret depths of Reality born out of reaction and disgust against the institutionalised Christian authority of the Middle Ages and the grandiose success of Science have disclosed the lurking dogmatism in their own approach in so far as they have accepted the instrumentality of Reason without verifying its credentials. In India, both in Buddhism and the Vedāntic Schools owing allegiance to the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra,* a threadbare analysis of the concept and the faculty of Reason was undertaken in order to comprehend its nature, its limits and the extent to which its efficacy in knowing the Ultimate Truth is maintainable. This critique of Reason not only in the philosophies of Śaṁkara and his followers but in Vallabha's system as well discloses in no uncertain terms that Reason is quite unworthy of comprehending

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (1, 2, 32). Vol. I, p. 362.
2. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 9).
3. Urquhart, W.S. : *The Vedānta and Modern Thought*, p. 78.
4. Glasenapp, H.V. : *Doctrines of Vallabhācārya*, p. 14.

the real nature of Brahman and other transcendent principles because of its inherent discursive and phenomenal nature creating limitations for its own operation.

As analysis of human reason may reveal that it has a 'double [1] action, mixed or dependent, and pure or sovereign'. In its mixed action, where it confines itself to the cricle of sensible experience, it concerns the appearances "of things in their relations, processes and utilities. This rational action is capable of knowing what is, it only knows what appears to be, it has no plummet by whict it can sound the depths of the being, it can only survey the field of becoming." [2] Pure Reason, on the other hand, notwithstanding its dependence *a-posteriori*, judges and works in its own right and strives to arrive at general, unalterable and necessary concepts which concern not only phenomena but throw light upon the foundational principle at the back of these appearances. But Pure Reason which brings us from physical to metaphysical knowledge is an inept and ineffectual instrument for arriving at an integral consciousness of the Ultimate Truth which is attainable only by a different faculty of human consciousness known as 'Intuition'. It is the faculty of Intuition which brings to sages the brilliant intimations and messages from the unknown; it brings them in a direct and immediate conscious communion with Truth. As explained by Śrī Aurobindo, "Intuition is unable to give us the truth in that ordered and articulated form which our nature demands. Before it could effect any such completeness of direct knowledge in us, it would have to organise itself in our surface being and take possession there of the leading part. But in our surface being it is not the Intuition, it is the Reason which is organised and helps us to order our perceptions, thoughts and actions." [3] Therefore, intuitive knowledge represented by Scripture stands in need of Reason for its cohesive and orderly representation to the human mind. Reason thus has its utility not in receiving the intimations of Truth but in organising them for onward presentation to the human mind which is prone to understand only through the categories of Thought. Thus when a Śaṁkara or a Vallabha warns [4] that

1. Autobindo : *Life Divine*, p. 58.
2. *Ibid*, p. 58.
3. *Ibdi*, p. 65.
4. Acintyā khalu ye bhāvāḥ na tānstarkeṇa yojayet. (*Matsyapurāṇa*, 112/6) This is quoted both by Śaṁkara (*Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 1, 6) and Vallabha (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 1, 27).

the supernatural and the transcendent Truth should not be associated with logic he is convinced of its futility as an instrument in realising the intimations of the Ideal or the Truth. Truth is no respecter of human conceit which imagines itself as the centre of all knowledge and philosophy. Reason has its limited function to discharge in providing knowledge and can command respectability to that extent only, i.e., its operational limits are confined to phenomena alone which is verily the field of Science. The Vedānta, therefore, thunders that because logic by its very character and constitution is an inefficient and ineffectual organ for the integral realisation of Truth, it is Āgama alone that has to be resorted to for getting a beam of eternal light from Truth.

Tarka.

The word '*tarka*' is used in Indian Philosophy generally in two senses, viz., ratiocination (*ūhā*) and inference (*anumāna*). In the former sense, i.e. ratiocination or *ūhā* it is a process which helps the *pramāṇas* to the determination of truth; it is, therefore, neither included within the accepted *pramāṇas* nor it is a separate *pramāṇa*. As explained by Jayanta in his *Nyāya-mañjarī*, "*Uhā* consists in weakening the chances of the weak alternative, thereby strengthening the probability of the stronger alternative and so helping the generation of a valid knowledge of the certainty of the latter alternative."[1] *Tarka*, in this sense, therefore, is the mental process which helps a *pramāṇa* in acquiring valid knowledge. The Nyāya logicians generally stressed on the use of *tarka* in clearing the doubts regarding the possible cases of the failure of reason and thereby rendering the knowledge of concomitance (*vyāpti*) infallible. The second sense in which the word '*tarka*' or reason is loosely used is 'inference' itself.

Now when we enquire into the use of 'reason' or *tarka* in the attainment of knowledge about Brahman we find that *tarka* in the sense of ratiocination (*ūhā*)[2] is acceptable even to the Vedāntists, Vallabha and others, because by its very nature *tarka* has only an auxiliary function in clearing the doubts about the dictates of Scriptural Testimony or the Vedas, which in this case are the only *pramāṇa*. It is only in the second sense, i.e., 'inference' that *tarka* is denounced as an ineffective means of knowing the Truth. Both Śaṁkara and

1. Dasgupta : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 188n
2. See Goswami Shyam : *The Philosophy of Vallabhācārya as It is* (Hindi), Chapter IV.

Vallabha argue that inference can never rent the veil covering the real eternal nature of Truth. They argue that because 'inference' is a *pramāṇa* which rests on the concepts of 'reason' and 'concomitance' it is futile to imagine about its operation with regard to Reality which in its ultimate aspect transcends all distinction and duality. They unequivocally denounce the very use and function of 'inference' in knowing the Truth; it is only for clearing the doubt that Brahman could be known by inference, suggested by the sūtra '*Janmādyasya yataḥ*' that the third sūtra '*Śāstrayonitvāt*' has been given by Vyāsa. Moreover, as logic is associated with the frivolities and shortcomings of the logician it is never an infallible instrument of the knowledge of Reality. As remarked by Prof. A.C. Mukerji, "Reasoning in so far as it is independent of traditional authority (*nirāgama*) has nothing to check its immethodical desultariness and, consequently, conclusion, however, carefully obtained cannot be placed above the risk of refutation by a powerful dialectician. The defect, it is said, is inherent in human reason which is different for different men and it vitiates all conclusions obtained through independent thinking."[1] Logic or Reason, in the sense of inference should, therefore, always be discarded in our endeavour for seeking the Truth.

The function of Logic and Reason.

This, however, does not mean that Reason or Logic has absolutely no place in the determination of the right knowledge about Reality. Logic, as argued above, has an auxiliary function to perform. It assists in arriving at a clear meaning of the scriptural dictates or Intuition and resolving the appearance of contradiction wherever it be. If a *śruti* appears to contradict another, reason assists in the resolution of the contradiction by undertaking a comparison of other *śrutis* or "intuitions and experiences in which the less luminous gives place to the more luminous." It is an accepted method of Vedāntic knowledge that an intuition is corrected or synthesised by a more perfect intuition and not by logical reasoning which has no merit to sit in judgement over them. The use of reason is, therefore, confined only to comparison and synthesis of scriptural pronouncements for obtaining a non-contradicted and immediate revelation of the Ultimate Truth.

1. Mukherji, A.C., : *The Nature of Self*, p. 358.

Therefore, both Vallabha and Śaṁkara declare, as a maxim, that Reason in so far as it is in consonance with the teachings of the Vedas is preferable but independent free thinking and argumentation on matters Divine, necessarily associated with all the weaknesses of the logician, is to be condemned and discarded. Reason is acceptable only if it is dependent on Scriptures, is engaged in their exposition and is in no way contradictory to their dictates. They even dislike the method of Sāṁkhya and Nyāya Schools which arrive at a conclusion by their independent thought-process and then try to justify it by referring to some scriptural texts. The correct Vedāntic process of knowing the Truth is to learn the scriptural dictates and then try to resolve by reasoning all the doubts that occur therein.

From the above account of the Vedāntic method it may be clear that so far as the knowledge of Brahman is concerned it is the scriptural text or the Intuition that is our sole guide. Any attempt at the knowledge of Brahman through Inference or Reason whose very constitution embodies a fragmented and analytic view of things is a hysteron-proteron of the most laughable and despicable type. Henri Bergson was nearer to truth when he professed that all the evil consequences and problems of philosophy have their source in the analytic and dialectical method followed by almost all the thinkers of repute right up from the times of Aristotle to the modern age and the mistake can be corrected only by resorting to the method of Intuition. "Let us separate the mind", he says, "from the space in which it is so at home, from the materiality which it takes to itself in order to rest upon matter. In so doing we shall restore it to itself and be able to comprehend it immediately. This direct vision of the mind by the mind is the chief function of Intuition as I understand it."[1] Further, in an open criticism of the dialectical method which endeavours to comprehend Reality through our partial, fragmented, egoistic, theoretic consciousness he moved his guns towards Kant, the representative of this method, and remarked, "The whole object of the *Critique or Pure Reason* is, in fact, to explain how a particular order is superadded to supposedly incoherent materials. And we know what

Similarity with Henri Bergson.

1. Henri Bergson : *The Creative Mind*, p. 42.

price it makes us pay for this explanation according to which human mind imposes its form upon a 'sensible diversity' of unexplained origin; and the order we find in things is the order we ourselves put in them... The merit of Kantianism has been to develop a natural illusion in all its consequences, and to present it in the most synthetic form. But it has preserved this illusion; it even rests upon it. Once we dispel this illusion we immediately restore to the human mind, through science and through metaphysics, the knowledge of the absolute."[1] The Vedānta, therefore, believed that any attempt at knowing the Absolute through Reason is a self-stultifying misadventure. Reality in its absolute, transcendent and integral aspect is realisable only through the higher, supra-rational faculty of Intuition which is the only communicant of the light shed on it by the Absolute. As the Vedas embody the eternal truths received by the seers of antiquity through this special human faculty they are accepted in the Vedāntic tradition the only *pramāṇa* for the transcendent and divine aspect of the Absolute.

Absolute Reality knowable only through Intuition- the Vedas.

This defence of the Vedic testimony as the supreme means of cognition in the sense that it alone can provide knowledge about the Ultimate Truth should not be misconstrued that all mundane (*laukika*) *pramāṇas* like perception and inference are easily sublatable by its dictates. As a matter of fact, as argued by both Vallabha and Śaṁkara, every *pramāṇa* is supreme in its legitimate field of operation. The fragrance of a rose can be grasped only by olfactory perception and its experience is never sublatable by any other means of cognition. In accordance with the doctrine of the self-validity of knowledge, the cognitions generated by a *pramāṇa* are always valid and there is no question of their being contradicted by any other *pramāṇa*; it is only an invalid knowledge that is an object of later sublation. Vallabha and his followers, therefore, contend that the operation of perception and inference, the two *laukika pramāṇas* or the mundane means of cognition, in their respective fields, is unbridled and their dictates are always valid.

Vedic testimony vis-a-vis mundane means of cognition.

Before ending this section it may be worth while pondering over a problem which is not only serious but is also the key to a

1. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

The method of interpreting the scriptural texts.

rightful and unmistaken knowledge of the *śruti*. If the Vedas or the *śrutis* are the only and the supreme *pramāṇa* how are we to understand their meaning when there is an apparent contradiction between them; for example, the *nirguṇa-śrutis* disclose that Brahman is indeterminate and attributeless whereas the *saguṇa-śrutis* declare Him to be personal and full of infinite divine attributes? The exponents of Vedānta generally adopted the dual method of literal (*abhidhā*) and figurative or symbolic interpretation (*lakṣanā*). When there appeared a contradiction, the Śaṁkarites took recourse to the symbolic or the figurative interpretation of the *śrutis* for the resolution of this contradiction which ultimately led to the preposterous classification of the *śrutis* as primary and secondary. Vallabha was quite opposed to this method. It was his firm conviction that while interpreting the *śruti* texts one should always adopt the literal meaning and sense of the words and phrases by applying the principles of textual interpretation as laid down in the Pūrva Mīmāṁsā system.

Seven means of textual interpretation.

The Mīmāṁsakas emphasized that there are seven important conditions [1] which should be carefully looked into for a correct determination of the meaning and purport of any work, chapter or sentence. These seven means of textual interpretation [2] are, respectively, the beginning (*upakrama*), the end (*upasaṁhāra*), the repetition (*abhyāsa*), the special communication (*apūrvatā*), the result (*phalam*), the extraneous discussions (*arthavāda*) and the proof (*upapatti*). When an author writes a book he generally declares his purport in the beginning and reasserts it in the end so that by attentively understanding the context and conclusion one can get an idea about the meaning and the intention of the work. Again, the author repeatedly hammers on the purport of his work during the course of his discussion; Thus by marking these repetitions it is easy to comprehend the meaning of the work. The fourth point is *apūrvatā*. In every work of importance

1. Upakramaupasaṁhārau abhyāso apūrvatā phalaṁ,
   Arthavādopapatau ca lingaṁ tātparyanirṇaye.
   See : Tilak, B. G. : *Gītārahasya* (Hindi), p. 21.
2. Goswami Shyam : *The Philosophy of Śrī Vallabhācārya as It Is.* (Hindi) p. 17.

the author has to convey some special idea or meaning which to his mind has not been represented before. Thus by tracing these novel ideas and reflections one can get a glimpse of the author's real purport. The meaning of a text is also disclosed when we consider the ultimate result of the whole work. Apart from these, the author is often prone to, during the course of his discussion, eulogising certain point by extolling or by comparison or by introducing some other extraneous matter by way of explanation technically called *arthavāda*; these *arthavādas* should be carefully identified and excluded for arriving at a proper comprehension of the text. Lastly, the proofs in support of his argument and in denunciation of the opponent's view give a sure sign to the real intention and meaning of the text. Thus, by carefully analysing and understanding these seven conditions and meanings of textual comprehension that the meaning and purport of a Vedic text should be understood.

Vallabha's emphasis on indicative method.

Vallabha in agreement with the above Mīmāṁsaka standpoint contended that by carefully adopting the above exegetic methodology every Vedic or scriptural-text can be indicatively or literally explained without resorting to the technique of figurative interpretation. As all *śruti*-texts are equally important and self-valid their apparent contradiction can be ultimately resolved by *śrutis* themselves for logic, as reason, has no status in determining their value or truth. If at all there remains a contradiction, it should be resolved by resorting to the doctrine that the Ultimate Reality or Brahman is the repository of contradictory attributes to which we referred in detail in the previous chapter. It is only when the indicative interpretation fails in every way that a symbolic or figurative interpretation should be undertaken. Vallabha in the very beginning of the *Aṇubhāṣya* declares, "The meaning of the Vedas is supra-mundane or supra-rational; it can never be obtained by logic. It can be grasped only through *tapas*, the Vedic-argument and the Grace of God."[1] Independent and free rational thought is incapable of grasping the ultimate nature and attributes of reality, a contention upheld by many eminent thinkers in the West like Colvin,

1. Alaukiko hi vedārtho na yuktyā pratipadyate,
Tapasā vedayuktyā tu prasādat paramātmanaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 13)

Montaigue, Pierre Charron and Bishop Huet who cited no less than sixty five philosophers and schools on the side of sceptical suspension of judgement in the face of all human evidence and declared that it is supernatural faith which gives us indubitable certainties and clear knowledge of Truth. To quote a line from John Dryden :

" Let reason then at her own quarry fly,
But how can finite grasp infinity ?"[1]

(I) THE THEORY OF ILLUSION

Explanation of the event of illusion, e.g., the appearance of silver in conch-shell or 'snake' in a 'rope' has been a topic of heated debate and controversy among the different systems of Indian Philosophy because of its far reaching influence on the assessment of the ultimate nature of Truth. To the Vallabhites, as acknowledged by Śrī Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa, a proper understanding of this problem has an added significance because of its direct bearing[2] on a correct and right comprehension of the nature of *prapañca* or the world-order. No one really denies the fact of illusion; the dispute and difference of opinion among the various schools of Indian Philosophy is only with regard to its nature, its origin and its psychological genesis. The philosophers of the Vāllabha School of Vedānta, especially Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa alias Lālū Bhaṭṭa, in his *Prameyaratnārṇava*, and Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja, in his *Khyātivāda*, have, in accordance with the principles laid down by Vallabhācārya himself in his *Subodhini* on the IIIrd Skandha (Canto) of *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, undertaken a threadbare analysis of this problem and have endeavoured to explain it in a way that may justify its distinction and difference from the *prapañca* (the world-order) and may leave no room for the confusion that the world-order is merely illusory.

In the previous sections of this chapter we have referred to the important principle of Vallabhite epistemology that every determinate (*savikalpaka*) knowledge, whether doubt, false or right knowledge, memory or sleep is preceded by an indeterminate knowledge (*nirvikalpa-jñāna*) which by nature is constituted of *sattva*. Subsequent to this, there arise different[3] types of determinate forms of knowledge in

1. Collins, J. : *God In Modern Philosophy*, p. 43.
2. Khyātibodhaṁ vinā prapañcasvarūpasyākalayituṁ aśakyatvāt. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, Khyātiviveka, p. 212).
3. *Ibid*, p. 213.

association with intellect and the innumerable gradations of the proportionate mixture of the guṇas, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Thus every determinate form of knowledge,[1] including illusion, is an intellectual apprehension in which intellect (*buddhi*) plays its part. Though the contact of *manas*, senses and the object is sufficient to generate the indeterminate or the general knowledge of a thing yet it is the intellect which provides it with such determinate forms as 'doubt', 'illusion' (*viparyaya*) etc.

Psychological genesis of Illusion.

Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa while explaining the psychological[2] genesis of illusion mantains that when the eye, as sense-organ, in association with *manas* comes in contact with the conch-shell it generates a general or indeterminate knowledge. Subsequently, *Māyā*, the power of God, by creating a preponderance of *tamas* deludes the intellect with the result that there is no such right knowledge as, 'This is conch-shell'. It is due to the predominance caused by *Māyā* that the manifestation of the real nature of the object, i.e., the conch-shell, is concealed and in its place the intellect, deluded by *Māyā,* in association with strong *saṁskāras* (latent tendencies) of silver, observing such similarities as lustre in the conch-shell creates the erroneous idea of silver which is purely an intellectual or subjective creation. As illusion is a form of determinate knowledge, 'silver' which is only a mental-creation was totally absent during the indeterminate state which was the object of the sense-contact or the ocular-contact. The illusory-silver, as the Vallabhites assert, is, therefore, not an object of the senses, e.g., the eye, but instead the object of *buddhi* or the intellect. The conch-shell-silver is thus both the creation and the object of intellect like the 'sense-data' of Western theory of Perception; as such, it is nomenclatured as the inner-creation or '*āntarālikīsṛṣṭi*'. The contention that in such cases of determinate knowledge as the illusion the object of apprehension is an inner or mental creation distinguishes it from the other two forms of knowledge, viz., indeterminate-knowledge and right-knowledge (*pramā*), where the object of cognition is the conch-shell (*śukti*) itself, not the conch-shell-silver, which is also the object of the sense-contact.

The nature of Illusion.

1. Bhāgavatamate buddhereva viśiṣṭajñānajanakatvāt. (*Ibid*, p. 215).
2. *Ibid*, p. 217.

In right knowledge or *pramā* the intellect (*buddhi*) apprehends only that which is the object of the senses and not something that is subjectively created by *buddhi* itself. Thus the object of illusory creation lies in between the senses and their object which is the reason of its falisity. The conch-shell-silver is only an intellectual creation and is specifically the object of intellect (*buddhi*) and not of any *indriya*. Vallabha himself stressed this point when he wrote in his *Subodhinī* that "the silver, after that, is created by *buddhi* to which is also refers as an object. There that *buddhi* is the cause... That which appears in between the sense-organ and its object is false." [1] Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa thus asserts that the nature of an illusory object is always false because herein we have an apprehension (*khyāti*) of that which is different from what is cognisable by and is the object of the senses. Since the knowledge in cases of error and illusion always pertains to the intellectually created object, different from the real ones, the true objects of senses, the Vallabhites assert that *viparyaya* or illusion is a case of *anyakhyāti* and nomenclature their theory of illusion as such.

Vāllabha *Anyakhyātivāda*.

The Vallabhite doctrine of *anyakhyāti* thus brings out four important features in its explanation of the psychological genesis of illusion. Firstly, the right-apprehension of the object of sense-contact is obscured by the preponderance of *tamas* caused by Māyā; secondly, the *vyāmohitātmikā* power of Māyā deludes the intellect which creates the object of illusory presentation; thirdly, the similarity between the objective presentation (i.e., lustre) and the latent *saṁskāras* of the mind rising at the conscious mental level is instrumental in shaping the form of the subjective-intellectual creation (the conch-shell-silver) and fourthly that the nature of the object of *viparyaya* of illusion is an *āntarālikīsṛṣṭi* which is both created and objectified by *buddhi* and has no reference either to the 'silver' in the shop, as in the case of Nyāya *anyathākhyātivāda*, or to any 'real-silver' created by the *pañcīkaraṇa*-process as contended in Rāmānuja's *satkhyātivāda*. The Advaitin's contention that the conch-shell-silver, the object of illusion is an inexplicable or *anirvacanīya* creation caused by Māyā or Ajñāna

1. *Subodhinī* on the śloka, 'Anumitamantarā tvayivibhāti mṛṣaikarane.' *Śrībhāgavata*, śloka (X, 87, 37).

which is different from both 'real' and 'unreal' is also discarded by the Vallabhites on several grounds. First of all, if the conch-shell-silver is a fact, though *anirvacanīya*, it is always obstructive and shall continue to impede the knowledge of the conch-shell with the result that there shall never be any knowledge of conch-shell and the false knowledge of silver would remain unsublatable. If the Advaitins contend that the simultaneous knowlēdge of both the conch-shell-silver and conch-shell is possible then this is something against all experience and, therefore, illogical. The natural consequence of the Śaṁkarite theory of *anirvacanīyakhyāti* would be the non-contradicted continuous presence of the illusion of silver. The disastrous effect of this conclusion, in its application to the philosophy of the falsity of world, would be its eternal continuity and its non-contradiction even after the knowledge of the Self has been imparted by the Scriptures. If the Śaṁkarites retort that the inexplicable world-order caused by Māyā can also be destroyed by Māyā itself then the Vallabhites would try to confute this by arguing that such an assumption would lead to the futility of the desire and enquiry for knowledge and the efficacy of the Vedāntic Scriptures for bringing out human deliverance. The doctrine of *anirvacanīyakhyāti*, is, therefore, redundant; the only correct and logically valid approach to a successful noetical interpretation of the fact of illusion is to admit that its presentation is caused by *Māyā* in the human intellect and that its objectivity is purely subjective and is not real in the strictly objective sense.

Denunciation of *Anirvacanīyakhyāti.*

It may, however, be objected : If the conch-shell-silver is a purely mental and subjective creation how can it be so objectively presented as to lead to such cognitive certainty that prompts a man to lift it up thinking that it is real silver? In reply to this objection Puruṣottama, both in his *Khyātivāda* and *Prasthānaratnākara* argues that "the illusion of conch-shell-silver is produced by the objective and the external projection of knowledge as a mental state through the instrumentality of *Māyā*; the mental state thus projected is intuited as an object."[2]

1. *Vādāvalī*, *Khyātivāda*, śloka, p. 121.
2. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, p. 360.

He specifically points out that the *buddhivṛtti* in the form of the *māyika* object is externally projected where it objectively appears in the locus which is either totally or partially shrouded and obscured. The Vallabhite theory of illusion is, however, named both by Puruṣottama and Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa as *anyakhyātivāda*.

Denunciation of Nyāya and Mādhva theories of Illusion.

For a clear and correct comprehension of the Vallabhite concept of *anyakhyātivāda* it may be prudent and worth while to distinguish and differentiate it from the other two theories of illusion advocated in Indian Philosophy by the philosophical systems of Nyāya and the Mādhva School of Vaiṣṇavism. The Naiyāyikas who were conscious that a positive manifestation of the superimposed entity (silver) is indispensable for any satisfactory explanation of the fact of illusion and that 'absolute non-existence', is neither capable of appearance nor can it explain the fact of sublation by later experience because sublation presupposes the prior existence of 'superimposed entity' contended that the superimposed entity e.g., silver had a real existence in some other locus (e.g., shop). The remembrance of this silver along with the malobservation of the conch-shell, rendered possible through the operation of defects, creates a false identification of 'silver' and 'conch-shell' and thus there is the illusion of silver. This theory of illusion termed '*anyathākhyātivāda*' by the Naiyāyikas implies and connotes that the silver which is the object of immediate apprehension has its existence in a different locus outside the span of illusory cognition.

The Mādhva School of Vedānta which advanced a different theory of illusion contended that in case of the illusion of 'silver' in 'conch-shell' the silver is absolutely non-existent. The appearance of the object of cognition (i.e., the conch-shell) in the form of a different entity (the silver), though absolutely non-existent, is what is termed in Mādhva literature as *anyathākhyāti*.

The Vallabhite concept of *anyayhākhyāti* is different and distinct from both the Nyāya and the Mādhva theories of illusion. To Vallabha and his followers *anyakhyāti* is neither the appearance of an entity and its consequent apprehension in a different locus nor the appearance of a totally non-existent entity. To them it is the apprehension of an intellectual concept caused by *Māyā*, the power of Brahman, in *buddhi* which lies in between the senses and their real objects. Because the

object of apprehension, i.e., the silver, which is *māyika* is different from the 'conch-shell' the illusory apprehension is termed [1] by them as *anyakhyāti*. The nature and status of silver for the Vallabhites is neither absolutely unreal, as in the case of the Madhvites, nor lies outside the compass of illusory perception. It is a fact — though *māyika* and purely intellectual — apprehended within the extent and purview of the erroneous perception caused by the sense-object-contact (between the eye and the conch-shell) at the initial indeterminate state. The impact of this *anyakhyāti* doctrine of illusion on Vallabha's defence of the reality of world and refutation of the Śaṁkarite philosophy of the falsity of world had been far and wide. We shall, however, revert to this point while discussing the Vallabhite Philosophy of World in a different chapter of this book.

Nirupādhika and *Sopādhika* Illusions.

Vallabha and his followers have referred to two types of illusion in their works, the unconditioned (*nirupādhika*) and the conditioned (*sopādhika*); the illustrations of 'unconditioned illusion' are the famous examples of the appearance of conch-shell as silver and the appearance of rope as snake. The conditioned or the *sopādhika* form of illusion is there where the erroneous perception is caused through some conditioning of limitative adjunct (*upādhi*). When a man who is whirling round and round sees that all things around him — the walls, the articles of the room etc. — are all rotating he is subjected to conditioned or *sopādhika* illusion. Another example of this type of illusion is the appearance of conch-shell to a man suffering from jaundice as yellow. In both these cases the illusions (of the 'pot' in the room as rotating or the conch-shell appearing yellow) are rendered possible because of the man's whirling and the diseased one's suffering from illness.

In an unconditioned illusion, e.g., the illusion of snake in a rope, the sense, i.e., the eye comes in contact only with the rope; the 'snake', however, is only a mental creation of the *buddhi* and serves as its object. The objectivity of the 'snake' which is termed as *viṣayatā* to distinguish it from real objects of phenomena, called *viṣaya*, is only an intellectual construction caused by the deluding power of *Māyā* and

1. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Khyātiviveka, p. 220.

has no existence in the real world of phenomena. The conditional illusions are different from the unconditioned ones by virtue of the fact that they are sublatable only [1] when the condition or the limitative adjunct causing their appearance is removed and not only by the knowledge of the locus or the substratum of illusion as in the case of unconditioned illusion. Whereas the illusion of 'snake' in a 'rope' or 'conch-shell-silver' in 'conch-shell' is sublatable by the later knowledge of the 'rope' or the 'conch-shell', the conditioned illusion of the rotation of the articles of room is removable only when the man stops whirling. Similarly, the illusion of conch-shell as yellow to a sick man suffering from jaundice can be removed only when his illness is cured and not merely by the knowledge that the conch-shell is white.

Besides this difference in the character of *nirupādhika* and *sopādhika* forms of illusion, the psychological genesis of the manifestation of conditioned or *sopādhika* illusion is also somewhat different from the process involved in unconditioned illusion. As asserted by Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa, "In a conditioned illusion the eye (the sense) apprehends both the 'real pot' and its false attribute (*viṣayatā*) the rotation, and then the subject on account of his defective intellect, under the influence of *Māyā* conceives that the pot is rotating."[2] Thus in a conditioned illusion the eye or the sense is in contact with both the 'pot' and 'rotation' because they are both real facts; it is only the superimposition of 'rotation' in 'pot' which is an intellectual construction and is, therefore, unreal. On the other hand, in an unconditioned illusion the sense, i.e., the eye, is in contact only with the object (the rope) whereas the *viṣayatā* (the snake) is absolutely *māyika*.

This distinction between the nature and the psychological genesis of the unconditioned and the conditioned forms of illusion has been utilized by the Vallabhites for disparaging the Śaṁkarite thesis of the falsity of world on the analogy of such forms of unconditioned illusions as the appearance of snake in a rope or the silver in conch-shell. They, on the contrary assert that for a proper understanding [3] of the real nature of *prapañca* or the world-order it is only the analogy

1. *Ibid*, p. 228.
2. *Ibid*, p. 230.
3. *Ibid*, with Dr. K.N. Mishra's translation, p. 231.

of the conditioned illusion that is of relevance and significance and not the analogy of the unconditioned illusion as upheld by the Advaita School of Vedānta. This, according to Vallabhites, is also the intention of the Scriptures. Just as in the case of *sopādhika* illusion, the 'pot' is real and the 'rotation' is *māyika*, the world-order or *prapañca*, as the Vallabhites contend, is real : such other facts as 'difference', 'origin', 'destruction' and 'perversion' (*kutsitatva*) that appear to be associated with it are all *māyika* like 'rotation' in the case of the analogy referred to above. We shall, however, discuss this problem a little at length in our chapter on 'The Philosophy of World'.

It should, however, be borne in mind that the *anyakhyāti* theory of illusion has its relevance only for the ignorant men of the world and not for the realised souls and the *yogins* who being omniscient are never under the spell of delusion. Since their knowledge of past, present and future is always right and correct they have no apprehension of illusion (*akhyāti*). Puruṣottama, therefore, declares that for the perfect *jñānis* and *yogins* the Vallabhite [1] view is *akhyāti*, whereas, for the ignorant and the deluded vulgar they profess the *anyakhyāti* theory of illusion.

1. *Vādāvali*, Khyātivāda, p. 130.

CHAPTER VI

CAUSALITY

Almost every theory of causality in Indian Philosophy had to approach the problem of causation in a twofold way : firstly, by initiating an enquiry into the very concept of 'cause', its nature and status and, secondly, by investigating into the principle, if any, that may, justifiably be regarded as the world-cause. Almost a similar approach to this problem is available in Vallabhite Philosophy where a vigorous attempt is made to explain the nature of 'cause' by defining it in a way that is novel and specially different from the definitions of the other important Schools and then an enquiry is initiated into the principle that is the ultimate cause or the ground of the whole world-order. We, therefore, find it prudent to adopt the same line of approach in our exposition of the Vallabhite theory of causation in this chapter.

(A) MEANING AND NATURE OF CAUSALITY

The Nyāya concept of cause.

The commonsense conception of the relation between 'cause' and 'effect', as philosophically enunciated by the Naiyāyikas, defines 'cause' as the invariable, unconditional, immediate and necessary antecedent and the 'effect' as that which follows the 'cause' by way of logical necessity or entailment. The Naiyāyikas who were opposed to the Mīmāṁsā contention that an unseen power resides in the cause on the ground that 'this is neither a matter of empirical observation nor of legitimate hypothesis' derived ample satisfaction simply by asserting that causation could be satisfactorily explained on the basis of temporal relation of antecedence and sequence provided the antecedent is invariable, unconditional, necessary and immediate. Such a conception of 'cause' based on the fundamental contention that 'cause' and 'effect' are two different facts may be useful for such philosophies that can recognise pluralism as the ultimate truth but for

the systems and ways of thought propelled with a tendency towards monism such as account of causation is dangerously misleading as it strikes at the very foundations of Monism. Naturally, the Vallabhites endeavoured to provide a more satisfactory definition of 'cause' that might be in consonance with their ultimate presuppositions that Brahman is the only Reality and the world-order or creation is His real manifestation.

The Vallabhite explanation of 'cause'.

Śrī Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*, defines cause as 'the substrate (*āśraya*) of the power of manifestation' [1] (*āvirbhāvaśakti*), i.e., the power that manifests the effect. Every existent, as the Vallabhites contend, is dispensed with by Brahman, with two powers [2] of *Āvirbhāva* and *Tirobhāva* emanating from His *acintya* infinite power or capacity; these two are responsible for the appearance or creation and disappearance or destruction of all facts and existents in world. By the term 'manifestation' (*āvirbhāva*) the Vallabhites mean the particular mode in which a substance acquires the potentiality of being the object of experience or of mundane [3] practical activity (*vyavahārayogyatva*); on the other hand, by 'concealment' is intended the loss or negation of the potentiality of being the object of experience which the said mode previously possessed and expressed. Thus the conception of 'cause' implies that it is a fact which has the power to propel or activate the manifestation of some mode or form in its substance or substrate; the mode or form which is thus manifested or acquires the potentiality to be the object of experience is termed 'effect'. This interpretation and explanation not only implies the necessary concepts of regular sequence and entailment but is also crowned with virtues of activity-theory which emphasised that a 'cause' in order to produce something must be 'active'[4].

The Vallabhite approach to the problem of causation disregards and refutes the Nyāya definition of cause as an invariable, unconditional,

1. Kāraṇatvaṁ cāvirbhāvaśaktyādhāratvaṁ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 10)
2. Āvirbhāvatirobhāvau śaktī vai muravairiṇaḥ.
3. Upādānasthaṁ kāryaṁ yā vyavahāragocaraṁ karoti sā śaktirāvirbhāvikā, āvirbhāvaśca vyavahārayogyatvaṁ, tirobhāvaśca tadayogyatvaṁ.
   (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 10).
   Also *Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, 15.
4. This theory also implied that the cause which is active is also 'willing'.

immediate and necessary antecedent for various reasons. When the Naiyāyikas define a cause as '*ananyathāsiddha niyatapūrvavartitvaṁ*' or an invariable antecedent which is not '*anyathāsiddha*' (implying by this term the three kinds [1] of conditionality) they involuntarily fall a prey to the two inexorable fallacies of logic, viz., mutual-interdependence (*anyonyāśraya*) and self-dependence or petitio-principii (*ātmāśraya*). As elaborated by Śrī Puruṣottama, the concept [2] of antecedence is relative to the concept of 'effect' which, on the other hand, is invariable and necessarily posterior to the said 'cause' implying the very concept of antecedence; the argument that the cause is antecedent (*pūrvavartī*), therefore, involves the fallacy of interdependence. Again, when the Nyāya philosopher qualifies this antecedence (*pūrvavartitva*) by *ananyathāsiddhatva* or the 'negation of *anyathāsiddhatva*' he means that the antecedent in question is different from *anyathāsiddhatva* which implies in its concept that its *cause* is located somewhere else. Thus while framing a definition of '*cause*', the Naiyāyikas depend on a concept which itself involves the very idea of 'cause'. The Naiyāyika's argument, therefore, clearly demonstrates the presence of *petitio-principii* in its bosom.

Refutation of Nyāya causality.

This refutation of the Nyāya definition of cause and their concept of the law of causation reveals the inherent weakness of a philosophical system that takes only a surface-view and explains the concept purely on empirical observations and foundations. In order that the 'cause' may be a valid and inviolable explanation of all facts, empirical as well as trans-empirical, the most satisfactory definition of this term, from the Vallabhite standpoint, would be to contend that it (cause) is 'the substrate of the power of manifestation'. Cause should, therefore, be understood more in the sense of 'ground' than 'antecendence' involving its externality from the effect and involving an external relation of 'inherence' as supposed by the Vaiśeṣikas. As remarked by Watson during his interpretation of Kant's view of Causality, "The word *cause*, when applied to the supersensible, signifies merely the ground which determines the causality of things to an effect." [3] Cause as *ground* has the inherent power of manifestation and activity which provides an

Cause as ground.

1. See *Dīpikā* on *Tarkasaṁgraha*, p. 71.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 10.
3. Watson : *The Philosophy of Kant*, p. 320.

internal relation to its various modes of appearance. Such an explanation of 'cause', therefore, denigrates any search for an external relation like that of '*inherence*'. The Vallabhites, therefore, criticise and refute the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika concept of 'inherence' and identify it with '*tādātmya*' or 'identity' interpreted in their own way.

Vallabhite criticism of Inherence.

It may be remembered that the Vaiśeṣikas conceived of an inseparable relation of inherence or *samavāya* for explaining the relation between two different things such as substance and attribute, substance and *karma* (action), substance and *sāmānya* (universal), cause and effect, atoms and *viśeṣa*, etc., so that the relata whose relationship could not be explained through the *yutasiddha* relation of contact (*saṁyoga*) could obtain a satisfactory explanation. The relation between cause and effect, to them, is also an example of the invariable relation of inherence which, as the Vaiśeṣikas conceived, is a unity which remains undisturbed even by the destruction of the facts which it relates.

This Doctrine of Inherence as a separate category (*padārtha*) has been confuted by many other systems of Indian Philosophy including the Vedānta as propagated in the *Brahmasūtra*. Vallabha and his followers, refuted, like Śaṁkara, the rationality and cogency [1] of the concept of 'inherence' on the ground that if a relation of *samavāya* is necessary to explain the connection between the *ādhāra* (locus) and the *ādheya* (located) then the relation of inherence itself being an attribute would require another *samavāya* and so on *ad infinitum*. If, however, another type of relation be conceived to explain the relationship between *samavāya* and its relata it would not only be difficult but even impossible to explain the nature of this relation of *samavāya*. The Vaiśeṣika Doctrine of Inherence, therefore, suffers from the fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum* (*anavasthā*); not only this, it also establishes that *samavāya* is as destructible as the relation of contact (*saṁyoga*) and all claims to the eternality of its character are simply preposterous.

Again, when the Vaiśeṣikas assert that the relation between the two *ayutasiddha* entities is *samavāya* or inherence [2] it is expedient that they should explain the term '*ayutasiddha*'. What actually is meant

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 11.
2. *Ibid.*

by this concept? The *ayutasiddha*, as the Naiyāyikas explain, are 'such pair' of objects between which the condition is that one, if in existence, must have the other as its substratum, [1] for example, the pairs like 'part' and 'whole' (*avayava-avayavin*), 'quality' and 'qualified' (*guṇa-guṇī*), 'action and the doer' (*kriyā-kriyāvān*), 'genus' and 'individual' (*jāti-vyakti*), specific attributes and ultimate eternal substances (*viśeṣa-nityadravya*). The Naiyāyikas during the course of their arguments for establishing their standpoint that when the locus (*ādhāra*) is destroyed the 'located' has to remain in existence for at least a moment justify [2] a relation of cause and effect between the two related entities of the *ayutasiddha* pairs. The Vallabhites now ask : How can Naiyāyikas [3] justify an inseparable relation of inherence between *ayutasiddha* pairs when they profess in accordance with the theory of *asatkāryavāda* that the existence of the effect is always posterior to the existence of the cause? As there always subsists a relation of cause and effect between the two relata of *ayutasiddha* pairs, the Nyāya philosopher can never establish the relation of inseparation between them. Hence there is no logical justification for their theory of inherence. Puruṣottama, therefore, propounds [4] that the only logically justifiable and valid relation between a cause and an effect is not one of *samavāya* (inherence) but *tādātmya* (identity) where *tādātmya* or identity is to be understood not in the Śaṁkarite sense of pure identity devoid of difference but an identity which is expressive and tolerant [5] of difference (*bhedasahiṣṇuabheda*). Difference and manifoldness as available in the world-phenomena or *prapañca* which is real and manifested out of Brahman's own will and in Himself, is just an aspect of a state of His Personal and Concrete Identity; likewise, Effect is just a manifested state of the Cause and the only rationally justifiable relation between them is one of identity or *Tādātmya*. *Samavāya* or 'inherence', from the Vallabhite standpoint, is not a separate relation subsisting between *ayutasiddha* entities but is only the relation of Identity [6].

Inherence is identical with *Tādātmya*.

1. Mishra, Umesha : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 493.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 11.
4. Tasmāttādātmyalakṣaṇa eva kāryakāraṇayoḥ saṁbandho na samavāyaḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 11)
5. Tādātmyaṁ ca bhedasahiṣṇurabheda eva. (*Ibid*, p, 11).
6. Na samavāyaḥ tādātmyātiriktaḥ. (*Ibid*, p. 11).

(B) KINDS OF CAUSES AND EFFECTS

(a) *Kinds of Causes*

There are two main varieties of 'Cause' in Vallabhite Philosophy, viz., (1) *Samavāyi-kāraṇa* (the Inherent Cause) and (2) *Nimitta-kāraṇa* (the Instrumental Cause).

(1) SAMAVĀYI-KĀRAṆA

Samavāyi-kāraṇa

Samavāyi-kāraṇa or Inherent Cause is that 'cause' which universally and unconditionally pervades the 'effect' in entirety. By virtue of its uncommon and extraordinary identity it acquires its ubiquitous presence in its 'effect' which is, as we have mentioned, only its manifested form. The other systems of Indian Philosophy generally represent this concept by the term '*upādāna-kāraṇa*' but Vallabha creates a subtle distinction between these two concepts. To him and his followers, the term *upādāna-kāraṇa* or material causality implies along with the concept of change its determined and limited character as well. Matter, in case of material-causality, in which the effect is produced by the operation of the instrumental-cause, is always *paricchinna* [1] (limited and determined in character). As it is always limited and determined, it is illogical to apply this term for explaining the causality of Brahman which is the ultimate cause of the manifestation of the world-order. Vallabha, therefore, argues that it is only the term '*samavāyi-kāraṇa*' that can correctly represent and explain the character of the causality of Brahman as propounded in Upaniṣadic-texts. The material-cause or the *upādāna-kāraṇa*, according to Vallabhites, is only a special [2] and particular state (*avasthā*) and, therefore, a manifestation of the *samavāyi-kāraṇa*, the inherent-cause. One should always be cautious not to misunderstand this term by identifying it with the meaning attributed to it in the Nyāya system because Inherence as understood by the Naiyāyikas is totally rejected in this system.

Upādāna-kārṇa as a special state of *Samavāyi-kāraṇa*.

The *upādāna-kāraṇa* (material-cause) which is just an aspect of the *samavāyi-kāraṇa* is of two kinds, viz., *pariṇāmi-upādāna* and *vivartta-upādāna* out of which the *pariṇāmi-upādāna* is again classified into *avikṛta-pariṇāmi* and *vikṛta-pariṇāmi*.

Types of *Upādana-kāraṇa*.

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 118 and *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 11.
2. Upādānastu samavāyina eva avasthāviśeṣaḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 11).

(a) *Pariṇāmi-upādāna* : The *pariṇāmi-upādāna* is the material-cause which manifests itself into an 'effect' having the same order of reality, such as the 'lump of earth', 'gold' or 'milk' which transform themselves into 'a jug', 'a necklace' and 'curd' respectively. The *pariṇāmi-upādāna* is again of two kinds, viz., *avikṛta-pariṇāmi* and *vikṛta-pariṇāmi*.

(1) *Avikṛta-pariṇāmi* - In this kind of transformation the essence of the material-cause remains unchanged so that the manifested effect may be brought back to its original causal position. The examples of this type of cause are 'gold', the 'lump of earth' etc. whose effects 'necklace' and 'jug' can again be converted into 'gold' and 'lump of clay'.

(2) *Vikṛta-pariṇāmi*- In this kind of transformation the essence of the material-cause is subjected to such a change that the manifested 'effect' can never be brought back to its causal position. The example of this type of *pariṇāmi-kāraṇa* is 'milk' which when converted into 'curd' is never transformable into milk again.

(b) *Vivartta-upādāna* : In this variety of the material-cause the 'effect' or the manifested form belongs to an order of reality different from that of the cause. Here there is no real transformation but only an illusory appearance of the 'effect' in the 'cause' or the substratum, for example, the illusions of snake in rope or the silver in a conch-shell. In such cases the material-cause is only the substratum of the illusory-manifestation without undergoing any real transformation. The differences between a *pariṇāmi-upādāna* and the *vivartta-upādāna* which form the very core of the doctrines of *pariṇāmavāda* and *vivarttavāda* are as follows :

(1) The effect in the *vivarttavāda* is an unreal transformation, whereas, in *pariṇāmavāda* it is a real transformation.

(2) The appearance of the effect in *vivarttavāda* does not affect the nature of the cause at all, whereas in *vikṛta-pariṇāmavāda* it actually modifies the nature of the cause.

(3) The order of the being of the effect in *vivarttavāda* is different from the order of the being of the cause, whereas, in *pariṇāmavāda* the two are not different.

1. Upādānaṁ ca dvividaḥ pariṇāmyupādānaṁ vivarttopādānaṁ ca. (*Ibid*).
2. Upādānaviṣamasattāko anyathābhāvo vivarttaḥ, (*Ibid*, p. 12).
3. *Ibid*, p. 12.

(2) NIMITTA-KĀRAṆA

Nimitta-kāraṇa.

The cause which is different from the *samavāyi-kāraṇa* is termed '*nimitta-kāraṇa*' or the instrumental-cause for example the potter, the wheel, the stick, etc., in respect of the causality of the 'pot'. The 'objects' and 'the operation of the senses (*indriyas*)' are the illustrations of the instrumental cause in the case of the production of knowledge.

According to Puruṣottama, the instrumental-cause may also be classified in the following two kinds :

Kinds of *Nimitta-kāraṇa.*

(1) The instrumental-cause used as an instrument or means for the production of an effect (*sāmagrī*) for example the stick and the wheel that are used by the potter for creating 'the pot'. This type of instrumental-cause is never subject to any change during the course of its operation.

(2) The instrumental-cause which when used as a material requirement for the production of an effect itself undergoes a transformation. The illustrations of such a variety of instrumental-cause are 'hay' and 'the two pieces of wood used in lighting and burning of the sacred fire (*araṇi*)'. When the fire has actually burnt, the two pieces of wood are consumed by the fire and transformed.

(b) *Types of Effects (Kārya)*

Types of effect.

In his *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya* [1] Śrī Puruṣottama refers to two varieties of 'effect', viz., *ārabdha* (produced) and *pariṇāma-bhūta* (transformed). The 'effect' which is manifested by the operation of an instrumental-cause is called '*ārabdha*' or produced, for example, a house; this type of effect is generally expressed by the word 'created' (*racitaṁ*) in ordinary language. The special feature of this kind of effect is its causal-dependence on some kind of intellect involving consciousness and spatio-temporal-condition. The transformed or the *pariṇāmi-bhūta* effect, on the other hand, is either wholly or to a larger extent dependent on the causal activity of the material-cause (*upādāna*) for example 'curd'. In ordinary human life these two varieties of 'effect' always appear to be opposed so much so that if an effect is transformed it can never be 'created' or produced and so vice-versa.

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, sūtra (2, 2, 1), p. 609.

(C) METAPHYSICAL STATUS OF CAUSALITY

Causality as real and metaphysically valid.

Before we pass on to the consideration of the next problem of the Ultimate World-Cause it may be worthwhile to examine the Vallabhite reaction to the question whether the law of causation is an ultimate metaphysical fact or it is only a phenomenal concept limited to the field of *vyavahāra* without any valid and convincing grounds for justifying its metaphysical and transcendental status. The Buddhists and the Śaṁkarites, as we know, were the vehement critics of the ultimate and translogical validity of causality which, in their analysis, is a self-contradictory concept, a conviction of the laity in which the average man is under the spell of the superstition that Causality is real.[1] As a consequence, such a theory led them to the conclusion that entities supposed to be caused are unreal because causality itself is a self-discrepant notion.[2] Though the Vedāntins differed with the Buddhists in maintaining the ontological and the metaphysical existence of the ultimate-cause, the Brahman, they nonethe-less were in deference to the Buddhist thesis that 'causality' is only a phenomenal category which is ultimately unjustifiable and unreal; a doctrine whose rumblings are audible in their cry that all 'effects' are, in reality, only *vivartta*.

Vallabha and his followers, who belonged to the camp of the Realists like Rāmāuja and Madhva, labouring hard for justifying the reality of the external-world, the *prapañca*, found in the Advaitin's doctrine of *vivartta* one more reason for proving their charge that the Śaṁkarites are only crypto-Buddhists (*pracchanna-bauddha*). The Śuddhādvaita or the Brahmavāda of Vallabha repeatedly harps on the tune that the world-order including its categories, even at its manifested state is Brahman [3] Himself who as per His own wish transforms Himself into its names and forms while at the same time remaining immutable or *avikṛta* by virtue of His inscrutable and inherent power of being anything [4] and everything at the same time (*sarvabhavanasamartha*). The world as it appears is only an aspect or status of Brahman. There

1. Roy, S.S. : *The Heritage of Śaṁkara*, p. 117.
2. *Ibid*, p. 117.
3. Prapañco bhagavatkāryaḥ tadrūpo-māyayā abhavat.
   (*Tattvadīpanibandha*, Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa, śloka, 23, p. 75).
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, Prameyapariccheda, p. 54.

is thus no justification for upholding the thesis of the falsity (*mithyātva*) of world and its categories whose detailed criticism, as available in the important Vallabhite works, will be undertaken in the chapter, 'The Philosophy of World' of this book. As the world and its categories are all real manifestations of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, 'causality' is also real and metaphysically vaild. The Vallabhite definition of 'cause' as the substrate of the power of manifestation, which acts as a ground to its effects, invested with the property of identification and synthesis, is essentially different from the Nyāya concept of 'cause' which being an invariable antecedent to the effect is always different and, therefore, unrelated to the effect. Almost the whole of the dialectical criticism and disparagement of the category of causality as put forward by Śrī Harṣa,[1] Citsukha and other Advaitins has always in view the concept of causality as contemplated in the Nyāya system and not the one which is advanced by the Vallabhites. The Nyāya theory of causation may be self-contradictory but it in no way justifies the inductive-leap that all causality is self-contradictory and, therefore, illusive. The Advaitins, from the Vallabhite standpoint, have been misled because instead of realizing the truth and value of Brahman's real omnipotence — His capacity to remain immutable notwithstanding transformations in Himself and His two special powers of manifestation and concealment as advocated in *śrutis* and other scriptural-texts — they, by their self-imposed interpretation that Brahman is undifferentiated and quality-less, could not vouchsafe the truth and worth of these principles which alone explain the reality of world and the theory of *pariṇāma* of creation so vehemently advocated in the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra*. As the world is a real transformation or manifestation, the relations of the various manifested facts in it. for example the one between knowledge and its objects and those subsisting between the objects themselves (in their manifested forms), are all real and metaphysically valid. The cleavage between Metaphysics and Logic or Epistemology may be a truth from the human standpoint trying to comprehend the Ultimate Being with its limited, partial and disintegrated intellect but for those inspired souls who have obtained an integral vision of Truth the transformation, in the specific Vallabhite sense, of the transcendental, the trans-empirical into the phenomenal,

1. Refer *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* and *Tattvapradīpikā*.

the empirical, is no amazement or impossibility. Therefore, all categories as explicitly manifested in world-creation are absolutely real without any iota of contradiction. When the author of the *Brahmasūtra* defined Brahman as the cause of the origin, sustenance destruction etc. of the world in the sūtra '*Janmādyasya yataḥ*' on the basis of the *Taittirīya śruti*,[1] he intended this causality to be metaphysically valid without providing any reason for the Śaṁkarite interpretation that it is only a *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*. The Advaitins were, as the Vallabhites argue, so much influenced by the spell of the Buddhist logic that they not only lost the real meaning of the Upaniṣad-texts but even worked hard to misrepresent them.

(D) THE THEORY OF *ĀVIRBHĀVA* AND *TIROBHĀVA*

Our exposition of the Vallabhite theory of Causality must have impressed upon the readers that the doctrine of manifestation and concealment (*āvirbhāva-tirobhāva*) being the nave of the wheel of his whole philosophy of creation forms the kernel of Śrī Vallabha's *Brahmavāda*. As acknowledged by Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha, a proper understanding of this doctrine removes all doubts and fully convinces the hearer about the truth and validity of *Brahmavāda*. We, therefore, propose to discuss this doctrine a little at length for its proper comprehension and assessment.

References in Upaniṣads and Āgamas.

The doctrine of *Āvirbhāva* and *Tirobhāva*, as acknowledged by the Vallabhites themselves, is not only as old as the ancient Sāṁkhya where it is employed as an instrument for explaining the evolution of all effects or evolutes from the Primordial Prakṛti but has its source also in the Theory of Emanation of the Pāñcarātra-Āgamas. Vācaspati Miśra while explaining the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* writes, "These arguments, we say, cannot prove the difference between cause and effect; because all the said differences can be explained and reconciled by attributing the notions to the appearance and disappearance of certain factors."[2] This passage explains the significance attached to this theroy in the Sāṁkhya system. The importance of this theory in the Pāñcarātra Āgamas may also be fully realised from the following

1. Yato vā imānibhūtani jāyaṁte. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (3, 1).
2. Vācaspati Miśra : *Sāṁkhyatattvakaumudī*, p. 22. Translation by Dr. Gangānāth Jhā.

passage from Dr. Schrader's *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*:

> "The Pāñcarātra teaches, a chain, as it were, of emanations; each emanation except the first, originating from an anterior emanation; and thus the favourite image of the process has, with the Pāñcarātrins, become that of one flame proceeding from aonther flame."[1]

Not only this, the primary judgement in chapter VI of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* that the knowledge of the one leads to the knowledge of all, explained further by the Philosophy of Being and such *pariṇāmi* illustrations as the gold and ornaments, earth and the jar etc. implies the tacit assumption that the doctrine of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* was implied by Āruṇi himself though not expounded in clear terms. In one of the mantras of this *Upaniṣad*,[2] the words '*āvirbhāva*' and '*tirobhāva*' are actually used to explain the appearance and disappearance of all from Ātman. The Vallabhites, therefore, argue that if in the context of the philosophy of Brahman as the only Concrete Reality the appearance of a real creation and world-phenomenon on the foundations of *satkāryavāda* is to be explained, the doctrine of manifestation and concealment, coming down to us from a hoary past, is the only refuge which we should accept without demur.

Nyāya objection.

The Naiyāyikas who uphold that the effect has no existence in the cause (*asatkāryavāda*) were dead against acknowledging the validity of the concept that the effect is only a manifestation of the Ground Cause. They, therefore, raised several objections against the Doctrine of Āvirbhāva and Tirobhāva and maintained its ultimate untenability. First of all, they asked : Are these, i.e., 'manifestation' and 'concealment' eternal or non-eternal [3]? If they are eternal, are they separate substances (*padārthas*) or are they only attributes of some substance? If it be accepted that they are eternal yet separate substances or entities as acknowledged in the Sāṁkhya system,[4] then the whole argument would lead to the total inexplicability of almost each and every object in practical life. If 'manifestation' and 'concealment' which mean 'knowledge of the object' and 'absence of knowledge of the object' respectively be eternal substances — as decreed in Sāṁkhya — then their substrates, e.g., the pot, would simultaneously be both present

1. Schrader, F. Otto : *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 40.
2. Ātmata āvirbhāvatirobhāvau. (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* mantra, 7, 26, 1).
3. Pūrvapakṣa as given in *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 36.
4. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 40.

and absent; consequently, one would fail to decide whether a thing (a pot) actually exists or not. This interpretation of '*āvirbhāva*' and '*tirobhāva*', therefore, brings us to a preposterous situation where nothing can be expressed as 'this', 'in this way' and the like.

If one may argue adopting the second alternative that 'manifestation' and 'concealment' are maintainable as eternal attributes of the substances to which they belong, one would be gravely mistaken for it is impossible to find such an eternal substance to which they may, on account of their inherent contradiction, pertain as attributes. This position would ultimately lead to the Buddhist interpretation of the nature of Being as Void.

Again, if the doctrine of manifestation and concealment implies that nothing is really eternal, it would strike at the very root of the concept [1] that 'means' can be employed for the attainment of an 'end'. If 'means' and 'end' are existent only for the period of their manifestation, then no one can really be prompted for acquiring a worldly object, e.g., a 'pot' or for undertaking costly and troublesome religious sacrifices (*yajñas*); no one would even try to obtain the knowledge of Brahman. The utility of all such means is, therefore, inconsistent with the doctrine of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva*. As the Vedas and the Upaniṣads explicitly enjoin the performance of the *yajñas* and other *sādhanas* this theory is at variance with their injunctions.

Lastly, it may be asked : How are we to explain the occasional experience of an object at a particular event of time and space? What causes the manifestation and concealment of an entity, for example a pot, at a specific time and space? If we analyse its causes we find that sense-object-contact is the cause of 'objectivity to experience' of the pot; the cause of the sense-object-contact is the contact between the sense and the *manas* and this process ultimately leads to the truth that the will of God is the ultimate cause of its manifestation and concealment. Now the problem arises : Is this Will eternal or non-eternal? If it is eternal then there will be continuous and simultaneous manifestation as well as concealment of the objects till eternity. Not only this, since there are infinite forms of manifestation and concealment in world-creation the simultaneity of their manifestations and concealments would present the whole cosmic creation as a horribly

1. Sādhane pravṛttiścānupapannā syāt. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 36).

confused mass. On the other hand, if it be argued that God's Will is non-eternal then the philosopher is bound to explain the reason for the manifestation of the Will; as the search after this 'reason' would involve the fact of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) this whole enquiry after the real cause of 'manifestation' and 'concealment' would reveal the ultimate vacuity of almost everything.

The proponent of the Āvirbhāva-Tirobhāva-doctrine may, however, disclaim the eternality of these concepts and may argue that they are only non-eternal or temporary attributes of the 'substances' to which they belong. But such a supposition would involve a contradiction within their own philosophy that asserts the eternal character of all God's attributes. If *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* are the powers of Brahman, as advocated by the theorists, then their eternality is also a foregone conclusion. Again, taken for granted, that *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* are non-eternal and temporal, the proponent is logically bound to explain their origin, a task in which he can hardly succeed in view of the logical difficulties mentioned above. The Nyāya opponent, therefore, concludes that the theory of manifestation and concealment employed as a device for explaining all creation as an evolution from a unitary principle, e.g., the *Pradhāna* of Sāṁkhya, is logically unsustainable and should, therefore, be discarded in toto.

Vallabhite repudiation of Nyāya criticism.

Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha, in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, adopts the above Nyāya [1] refutations as the prima-facie view whose objections he tries to remove during the course of the enunciation of his own thesis. According to him, 'manifestation' [2] connoting the 'capability of becoming an object of experience', as explained in the previous pages of this chapter, and 'concealment' implying 'incapability of being the object of experience' are two of the infinite powers [3] of Reality in which they subsist as attributes. Since Brahman, along with his attributes, is eternal, these two powers eternally subsist in Him. As explained by Viṭṭhalanātha, *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* are the two eternal attributes (*dharmas*) of Brahman which regularly and continuously manifest and

1. Anubhavaviṣayatvayogyatā āvirbhāvaḥ, tadaviṣayatvayogyatā tirobhāvaḥ. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 44)
2. Ucyate tau hareḥ śaktī niyatāvicchato tataḥ. (*Āvirbhāva-tirobhāvavāda* of Puruṣottama, śloka 2. Quoted from *Vādāvali*, p. 185).
3. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 54.

conceal the objects to jiva's experience as per the Wish[1] of the Lord. Though God's Wish which is the real cause, the agent and the propeller of all appearance and activity is as eternal as Brahman Himself, yet it is foolish to argue that the concept of eternality would mean their continuous and simultaneous appearance and disappearance. Brahman's Wish notwithstanding its eternality, can take any form to manifest or conceal any object in any form anywhere. It is an important feature of Vallabhite Philosophy that not only the Reality of Brahman is permanent and eternal but all forms in which He manifests Himself in creation, in all times, past, present and future, are also eternal. This point is brought to prominence by Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha when he refers[2] to the famous *Mahābhārata* anecdote which describes that Vyāsa, in order to console Gāndhārī, asked Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the Pāndavas and the women-folk to go to the river Ganges and then come to him at the fall of the night. When they did so, Vyāsa called forth all warriors and kings who had been killed in the battle to rise. Through Vyāsa's spiritual power they all arose and at the end of night they all disappeared. When Janamejaya enquired as to how all that was possible Vaiśampāyana replied, "It is established that there is no destruction either of the *karmas*, or of the bodies — caused by such *karmas* — and their shapes and forms."[3] The upthrust of this argument, which is adopted by the Vallabhites, is that all things eternally persist not only in their essence but in their forms as well. It is only God's Wish that through His inscrutable power of manifestation presents a thing at a particular time and space, technically nomenclatured '*rūpalīlā*' in Vallabhite literature. Vallabha and his followers almost literally adopt the *Chāndogya*-text that declares; 'All this, verily, is Brahman',[4] and following the interpretation of *Śrīmadbhāgavata* declare that all that existed in the past, exists in the present and shall exist in future is Brahman. The cosmic universe having its existence in all the three conditions of time is thus only an aspect or effect of Brahman as declared in the *Puruṣa-sūkta*[5] enjoining that all the past, present and future is only the *Puruṣa*.

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 36.
2. *Ibid*, p. 25.
3. *Ibid*, p. 55.
4. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (3, 14, 1).
5. Puruṣaivedaṁ sarvaṁ yad bhūtaṁ yaccabhāvyaṁ. (*Puruṣasūkta*, mantra, 2).

The Vallabhite justification for the validity of the doctrine of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* has its basis not so much in independent human logic,[1] like Sāṁkhya, as in the dictates of the śrutis whose validity (*prāmāṇya*) is beyond doubt. The *śrutis* repeatedly emphasize that Brahman is the only reality, that He exists in all times and that His desire for sport promoted Him to be many. As observed by Vallabha, "In reality, Brahman manifests Himself in the form of cosmic-universe for the sake of joy as revealed in such *śrutis* as, 'He was not at all happy'[2] etc. After manifesting Himself as the cosmos, the individual-souls and all other objects that serve as the means He engages Himself in His Divine Sport."[3] Such a philosophical exposition removes the doubt regarding the possibility of the doctrine of *Āvirbhāva* and *Tirobhāva* terminating in the theory of ultimate *Nissvabhāvatā* or Void (*Śūnyatā*). The assertion of an ultimate[4] positive Reality is the necessary foundation of this theory.

The opponent's criticism that the notion of the permanent or eternal character of such attributes as 'manifestation' and 'concealment' would imply their permanent 'appearance' and 'disappearance' resulting in the annihilation of all worldly activity, including religious rituals and all the *sādhanas* enjoined in the Scriptures, is redundant because all manifestations and concealments in the universe are governed by Brahman's Eternal Will. It is His Wish that dictates the manifestation of an object and its concealment too when other is manifested just as 'smell'[5] is manifested along with the manifestation of 'earth' and is concealed when there is the manifestation of 'fire'. Those who are unable to comprehend the validity of this standpoint are under a spell of ignorance because they fail to realize and grasp the two important principles of His Divine Existence — His inherent potentiality to be anything and everything and His quality of being the substrate of contradictory attributes. The doctrine of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva*, which, according to Vallabhites, is based on *śrutis* and other scriptural-texts is the only theory that satisfactorily explains the fact of real creation on the presupposition of a monism that recognises Brahman, the Ultimate

1. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 57.
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (1.4.3).
3. *Tattvadīpanibandha, Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 80.
4. Te ca vastusattvenaivāvacchidyete. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 44).
5. *Ibid*, p. 54.

Reality, to be both transcendent and immanent. The notions of 'origination' and 'destruction' in accordance with this theory imply neither an absolutely new creation nor an absolute destruction but only the manifestation and concealment of the counterpositive (pratiyogin), i.e., the entity whose origination or destruction is being referred to. The whole process of 'experience' and 'perception' can thus be explained on the basis of this theory.

It is often argued by the opponents that for the continuity and persistence of the external-world 'space' and 'time' should be considered 'eternal' otherwise the very foundation of spatio-temporal-relation in world would be shaken. But such an assertion would mean, in accordance with the *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva*-theory that all things belonging to past, present and future would simultaneously be both the object of apprehension and non-apprehension. According to Viṭṭhalanātha, such a doubt is irrelevant because even when 'space' and 'time' are eternal, the manifestations of objects can be successive because *āvirbhāva* is ultimately governed by Lord's Wish or *Kriyāśakti* which, as explained by Puruṣottama,[1] is of two kinds, viz., undetermined and determined. In the first (i.e., the undetermined) when Braman desires to be many there is a direct manifestation of space, time, souls, etc., without involving any determinant. In the second, however, there is a determinant (*avacchedaka*) involving 'differences' in accordance with which things are revealed as existing at one place and at a particular time involving distinction with all others. Thus while 'space' and 'time' being the undetermined manifestations of Brahman are eternal, the manifestations of the worldly objects, as governed by Brahman's 'determined-wish', appear to be successive (*kramika*). There is thus no justification in the opponent's contention; the *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva*-theroy is, therefore, beyond all doubt and suspicion.

(E) AVIKṚTA-PARI ṆĀMAVĀDA (THE THEORY OF IMMUTABLE TRANSFORMATION)

As we shall discuss, in detail, in this chapter, Vallabha like many other interpreters of the *Brahmasūtra* established the position that Brahman, the only immanent and transcendent Reality is the inherent as well as instrumental cause of the real world-order. Such a position was, naturally, inclined to denounce the very leanings towards the interpretation of world-phenomena and creation as a mere *vivartta* or false superimposition on the Ultimate Truth as advocated

1. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 61.

by the Śaṁkarites; it recognised the wisdom of the philosophy that the cosmic-universe is a real transformation or *pariṇāma* from a monistic principle as adopted by a real transformation or *pariṇāma* from a monistic principle as adopted by the Sāṁkhya system. Most of the Vedāntins, therefore, gave credence to the theory of *satkāryavāda* or the doctrine that the effect subsists in the cause implying that it is a real transformation or modification of its cause. However, when they came to grapple with the problem of explaining the fact of the modification of world from an ultimate principle which is of the nature of *Saccidānanda*, is eternally pure, conscious and free, is endless and partless they parted in their ways. Both Rāmānuja and Madhva were conscious of the difficulty that an attempt to explain 'creation' as a real transformation from Brahman would mean Its modification and change (*vikāra*) striking at the very root of the concept of Its immutability. They, therefore, concluded that the real material-cause of 'world' is only *Prakṛti* or *acit* and not Brahman in a primary sense. Whereas Madhva categorically denounced the very suggestion of holding Brahman as the material-cause, Rāmānuja following his theory that Brahman is *cidacidātmaka*, claimed that the reference to the material causality of Brahman in the *śrutis* is only because *Prakṛti* is a part of Brahman's Concrete Individuality.

Problem arising out of *Pariṇāmavāda*.

Rāmānuja and Madhva.

Vallabha who was also conscious of the difficulty that the philosophy of a real transformation is always pregnant with the necessity of Brahman's mutability adopted a line of interpretation basically different from those of Sāṁkhya, Rāmānuja and Madhva. To him, it is improper to suggest that the reference to the material-causality of Brahman in the Upaniṣadic-texts is only secondary for this would disparage his basic tenet that as far as possible all the scriptural-texts should be accorded a primary meaning. There is absolutely no question of doubting the scriptural assertion that Brahman is the material-cause. Those who are afraid that the introduction of the concept of real transformation would imply Brahman's mutability are ignorant of the basic truth that it is an aspect of Brahman's Greatness or *Mahimā* that He, while undergoing real transformation, is not subjected to any change, modification or mutation. By His Will and His mysterious power of *Māyā* He veils some of His attributes and manifests some

Vallabha's solution through *Avikṛtapariṇāmavāda*.

Exposition of *Avikṛta-pariṇāmavāda*.

others resulting in the manifestation or *āvirbhāva* of the cosmic universe whereas in essence He continues to be transcendent and unaffected [1] by all such transformations. This doctrine of *Avikṛtapariṇāma* or Immutable Transformation is the basic principle on the basis of which the Vallabhites declare that the cosmic-universe is a real transformation of Brahman. As we have mentioned above in this chapter, the mundane illustrations of immutable transformation are the gold (transforming into ornaments), the clay (modifying into various kinds of clay-pots), etc. The effect, in these cases, which can be converted into its original causal position, is just another aspect or position of the cause just as the snake [2] sitting coiled is the same elongated snake trying to run away. These illustrations explain Śrī Vallabha's philosophical position that the form of the effect is inconsequential in bringing about any change in the 'essence' or 'being' of the cause which remains the same throughout in past, present and future; a necklace [3] was gold before, it is gold even when it is a necklace and it will be gold even after its dissolution and conversion into gold. In the same [4] way Brahman continues to be Brahman, in time and beyond time, without involving any idea of mutation. Even when Brahman, through His Inscrutable Power and Will manifests from His *sadāṁśa* or existent-part the manifold variety of cosmic universe, which is a real transformation, He remains absolutely immutable. It would be a logical perversion to argue that every real transformation is necessarily mutable because it disregards Brahman's essential nature and greatness (*mahimā*) in His Divinity by which He transforms [5] Himself into the cosmos without subjecting Himself to any change; His tansformation is divine and extraordinary (*alaukika*) transcending all concepts and ideas of mundane and ordinary (*laukika*) transformation. One can acquire the knowledge of this divine, extraordinary and immutable transformation and the ultimate causality

1. Na vikāri, tathā braḥma vyāsaiḥ sūtre nirūpitaṁ,
   Suvarṇasyāvikāritvaṁ kāmadhenormaṇerapi.
   (*Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, 13)
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 'Ubhayavyapadeśat tu ahikuṇḍalavat' (3, 2, 27) See also *Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, śloka, 13.
3. Yathā suvarṇaṁ sukṛtaṁ purastāt paścācca sarvasya hiraṇmayasya,
   Tadeva madhye vyavahāryamāṇaṁ nānāpadeśairahamasya tadvat.
4. Avikṛtameva pariṇamate suvarṇaṁ (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 538).
5. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (1, 4, 26), p. 538.

of Brahman only through *śrutis* or the Vedic-texts and not through the application of the different principles of logic.

(F) BRAHMAN, THE WORLD - CAUSE

The problem.

While discussing the nature of Brahman, in a former chapter of this book, we have indicated that Vallabha was the inheritor of the Vedāntic legacy of the philosophy of a pure monistic Reality which by nature transcended as well as pervaded the mighty and unlimited universe of Nature and Spirits. As Brahman is the only Reality, without a second, It is irrefragably the ultimate cause of cosmic evolution or creation deployed, by way of manifestation, on the surface-so to say- of His Infinite Being. The point that Brahman is the final cause of cosmic-creation has never been a subject of doubt with any of the interpreters of Vedānta but whether He is only a material-cause or instrumental-cause or both has been a topic of heated debate and controversy. Even if material causality is to be attributed to Him should it be treated as absolutely unassisted or in association with some other auxiliary principle? These were some of the questions that led to the divergence of opinion on the problem of Brahman's causality among the different exponents of Vedānta. Some of the commentators of the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra*, for example Madhva and his followers, were opposed to the very idea of attributing material causality to Brahman for the simple reason that such an attempt would establish His character as modified and subjected to the *guṇas* (attributes) of *Prakṛti*, destroying the very concept of His eternality. Moreover, the two concepts of 'material-cause' and 'instrumental-cause' are so diametrically [1] opposed that they can hardly be comprehended and included within a single principle. It is, therefore, logically prudent to assert that it is really *Prakṛti* that is the material or the inherent cause of world-creation whereas Brahman is only the instrumental-cause whose Will motivates and governs the process of creation. As interpreted by Jaya Tīrtha, "*Pradhāna* (Primordial Matter) forms the body of the Lord which actually evolves as 'world' and into which at the time of world-dissolution the various evolutes dissolve. It is because the *Prakṛti* forms the body of the Lord and is conceived as a unitary organism with Him that there is a reference in the *śrutis* to the

Mādhva view that Brahman is only the instrumental cause.

1. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 74.

material causality of Brahman. In fact it is the *Pradhāna* that is the material-cause of the world-order and not Brahman." [1] Moreover, as argued by Jaya Tīrtha, the very idea of material causality fundamentally implies that the attributes of the 'cause' pass on into the 'effect'; as such the attribution of material causality to Brahman would imply that His special attributes such as *sat*, *cit* and *ānand* and His essential freedom from sins would also enter into cosmos rendering it conscious, blissful and beyond all possibilities and types of sins. It is, therefore, irrelevant to assert that Brahman is directly the material cause of cosmic creation.

Rāmānuja's view.

Rāmānuja too was impressed by the logic of the above reasoning; yet, because the *Brahmasūtras* were tilted in favour of the philosophy that Brahman is both the material and the instrumental cause of the universe and because the Upaniṣadic texts were emphatically assertive that there is only one Reality without a second he conceived of Brahman as Concrete Individual within whose organism lie the subtle-causal-principles of Matter (*acit*) and Spirit (*cit*). It is really the *acit* principle within the Qualified Monism of Brahman which is the material cause of Nature, because the *acit* is within Brahman's Organic Whole, the *śrutis* declare Him to be both the material and the instrumental cause of the world-order.

The Vivaraṇa School of Advaita Vedānta.

Some other exponents of Vedānta, specially the Vivaraṇa Prasthāna of the Śāṁkara School introduced the principle of *Māyā* in explaining the material causality of Brahman. They had the courage of formulating the conception that Pure-Brahman without the association of Māyā is quite incapable of acting as a material-cause. In their opinion, both Brahman and *Māyā* together form the material-cause of the world-order. The association of *Māyā* for the purpose of world-creation is explained in the following three ways [2].

(1) Like the two twisted threads in a rope, both *Māyā* and Brahman form the material-cause of the world-order.

(2) *Māyā* is the power of Brahman and is directly the material-cause of world. As power depends on the powerful, *Māyā* is also dependent on Brahman and, hence, the material causality of world as attributed to Brahman in the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra* is only figurative.

1. *Ibid*, p. 75.
2. *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṁgraha*, p. 604.

(3) *Māyā* which is illusorily imposed on Brahman is really and directly the material-cause. But as *Māyā* is 'non-existent' apart from Brahman, its support or substratum, Brahman is spoken of as the material-cause of world-phenomenon. Prakāśānanda was quite outspoken in his declaration that it is *Māyā*[1] and not Brahman which is the material-cause; the concept of material causality, according to him, is only figuratively attributed to Brahman because of Its being the support and the substratum of the cosmic principle of *Māyā*.

Nirguṇa Brahman really the inherent and the material cause.

These philosophical positions covertly referred to by Vallabha, in his *Aṇubhāṣya*, as the prima-facie (pūrva-pakṣa) view have been refuted and discarded by him because they are at variance with the principal Upaniṣadic dictum that the Reality is only one without a second, the knowledge[2] of which leads to the knowledge of all. Any introduction of a second principle, whether *Prakṛti* or *Māyā*, as an auxiliary condition for explaining the causality of Brahman either as an independent principle or forming part of Brahman's Organic Whole is a gross misrepresentation of the *śruti*, which, as explained by Vallabha, is unambiguously assertive that Brahman, the Reality, though determinate and attributive, is a homogeneous monistic principle within which, in its ultimate poise, no differentiation is admissible. It is really Pure Nirguṇa Brahman in its ultimate nature that is the ground and the inherent cause of cosmic manifestation. The Madhvite contention that because the very idea of material-cause is suggestive of its modification and, therefore, mutation, the scriptural-texts are to be so interpreted as to subscribe material causality to *Prakṛti* and indirectly to Brahman because of His governance and rulership is faulty[3] and illegitimate because it manifestly betrays the other Upaniṣadic texts declaring that Brahman diversified Himself into many and that the universe is His own creation out of Him. Such texts leave no iota of doubt that the inherent-cause of the 'cosmos' is no other than Brahman. The Rāmānuja interpretation of material causality on the foundations of his philosophy of Brahman as *Cidacidviśiṣṭa*, a Qualified Monism on the basis of such *śrutis* that

Refutation of Rāmānuja and Madhva.

1. *Vedānta-siddhānta-muktāvalī*, p. 116.
2. Sadevasomyedamagrāsīt ekamevādvitīyam.
   (*Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra, 6,1,1).
3. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 541.

speak of His Body, is basically misguided because of his serious misunderstanding of such texts. All *śrutis* that are indicative of His possessing a body, as explained by Vallabha and his followers, refer to the situation and status of Brahman at the time of the beginning[1] of creation — the first phase of His descent, the Puruṣāvatāra — and not to His ultimate poise of Being. As in his ultimate status Brahman is without any body, either physical or celestial, it is illogical to assert that the *śrutis* describing His Body are indicative of His ultimate status. Thus Rāmānuja's philosophy that conceives of Brahman as an organism including the subtle form of Matter or *acit* — the real material-cause of universe as explained by him — is not supported by the Upaniṣadic and other scriptural texts. Vallabha, therefore, concludes that it is a definite and decisive verdict of the *śrutis* that the Nirguṇa Brahman alone is the inherent-cause (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*) of cosmic manifestation.

As Brahman is the only Reality, Vallabha argued and demonstrated on the authority of the *śrutis* that He is both the material and the instrumental cause of cosmic creation. Instead of the term '*upādāna-kāraṇa*' (material cause) he prefers to use '*samavāyi-kāraṇa*' (inherent-cause) which to him is more expressive and connotative of His immanence and comprehensive pervasiveness. As '*upādāna-kāraṇa*' is only an aspect of '***samavāyi-kāraṇa***', as elaborated in this chapter, he generally used the term '*samavāyi-kāraṇa*' to explain Brahman's material-causality.

While commenting on the sūtra '*Prakṛtiścapratijñādṛṣṭān-tānuparodhāt*'[2] Vallabha demonstrates that Brahman is both the inherent and the instrumental cause of the world-order which as an effect is identical (*ananya*) with Him. The sūtra lays two chief reasons for establishing the truth of Brahman's inherent causality. First of all, in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, we have the proposition (*pratijñā*), 'That through which the unheard becomes heard, the unthought of becomes thought of and the unknown becomes known',[3] and then there are the illustrations : (1) 'Just as through a single ingot

Reasons for Brahman's inherent causality.

1. Na ca śarīrabodhakaśrutivirodhaḥ. Tasyāḥ sṛṣṭikālīnavṛttāntaparatvāt. (*Prakāśa*, p. 533.)
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (1, 4, 23).
3. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantras (VI, 1, 3 to 6).

of gold, all that is made of gold would become known' (2) 'Just as through a single nail-clipper all that is made of iron would become known' and (3) 'Just as through a clod of clay all that is made of clay would become known'. These two, i.e., the proposition and the illustrations explain that the *Chāndogya*-text is assertive of the truth that Brahman is the inherent-cause of the manifestation of world-phenomena as name and form. Realising that the mere assertion of the judgement (*pratijñā*) might lead to the misunderstanding that it refers to the perception of the *yogins* (*yogajapratyakṣa*) the *śruti* explained the point by citing three illustrations. These illustrations hammer on the point that by cognising one 'effect' (clod of clay) as the modification of its 'cause' (clay) one can easily comprehend that all other 'clods of clay' are also modifications of 'clay' implying that 'clay' is the inherent-cause of all such cases. The point stressed here by the *śruti* is that the knowledge of the inherent-cause is obtainable only by cognising a single instance[1] without involving the complex psychological process of generalization; the knowledge of the inherent-cause is thus the result of a single immediate apprehension without involving the category of the 'universal'. Similarly, when the existence (*sat*) of a particular object is ascertained one has the apprehension of the immanence of *sat* or the existence aspect of Brahman in all things implying that Brahman is ultimately the *samavāyi-kāraṇa* of all that exists in phenomena. The immanence of Brahman in universe is decreed in the Gārgī-Brāhmaṇa of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* where a detailed exposition of His pervasion is undertaken.

Notwithstanding the certitude about the immanence and inherence of the *sat*-aspect of Brahman, Puruṣottama provides an inference [2] for justifying Brahman's inherent causality available in the *Chāndogya* itself where it is contended : 'Thus, my dear, know this to be the sprout shot up; and it could not be without a root. Where could its root be apart from food? So, my boy, from food as the sprout infer water as the root; from water as the sprout, infer fire as the root; from fire as the sprout, infer Being as the root. All these creations, my dear, have their root in Being, reside in Being and rest in Being."[3]

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 531.
2. *Prakāśa*, on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 579.
3. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantras (VI, 8, 3 to 4).

This argument emphasises the validity of the cosmological argument from the facts of creation to Being or Brahman in His Existence aspect as the ultimate inherent-cause which, as the Vallabhites explain, is just a synonym of 'identity' or '*tādātmya*' as contemplated in their philosophy.

Argument for Brahman's instrumental causality.

The reason for the assertion that Brahman is also the instrumental cause is indubitably available in the philosophical conviction that His is the only reality without a second. Those who decry the postulation of the existence of both kinds of causation — inherent and instrumental-on the ground of the non-availability of any such illustration in phenomena, such as the Madhvites, are deeply ignorant of Brahman's essential characteristic by which He is the substratum of contradictory attributes and is capable of being all and everything at the same time. The Upaniṣads declare in no uncertain terms the instrumental causality of Brahman, when they assert:[1] 'From that Brahman, which is the Ātman, was produced space, That Brahman created Itself by Itself.'[2] Not only do the *śrutis* emphasise His instrumental causality, they also stress upon the truth that He is also the agent, the creator of the cosmos as elaborately discussed in the fourth chapter of this book. Whereas His Will works as an instrumental-cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*), it is His inherent-power that starts and sustains the creative process.

As we have already discussed, because Brahman is the inherent-cause, His essential attributes, viz., *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, are also revealed, though in a very limited, finite and perverted form, in His phenomenal manifestations. These three essential attributes, viz., Existence, Consciousness and Bliss form the ground and the basis of subsequent transfiguration and evolution of world-phenomena; 'Existence' is revealed in Matter, both 'Existence' and 'Consciousness' are manifested in 'souls' and Bliss is manifested, though partly, in the *Antaryāmin*. Brahman's six particular characteristics or *asādhāraṇa-dharmas*, such as the attribute of being the essence of all that phenomenally exists, His quality of being the Ground and the Ultimate cause of cosmic

1. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 1, 1).
2. *Ibid*, mantra (2, 7, 1).

manifestation, His absolute infinity meaning His transcendence of all the three kinds of finitude etc., however, do not pass on to the cosmic universe because the *asādhāraṇa-dharmas* of the 'cause' are never transferred to the 'effect'. Notwithstanding His transformation into the world-order, Brahman in His transcendence remains Immutable by virtue of His special attribute nomenclatured 'Vīrya' in the Vaiṣṇavite and the Pāñcarātra literature.

CHAPTER VII

IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

The need for the explanation of the category of 'difference'.

To all such philosophical schools that claim Absolute Monism as the ultimate character of Truth the phenomenal perception of 'difference' has always posed a serious and formidable problem. If the Ultimate Reality is one, homogeneous Being, whether attributive or quality-less, what is the status of 'difference' which we always apprehend in almost every kind of phenomenal perception? Is it real or unreal? If real, how can it be reconciled with the basic foundations of philosophy preaching the Ultimate Reality to be only one and without a second? Consequently, in finding a solution to this problem the monists of different hues, in Indian Philosophy, either declared that 'difference' is unreal, superimposed and *anirvacanīya*, like the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, or adopted some kind of 'identity and difference' (*bhedābheda*) for the justification of the reality of difference against the background of Ultimate Identity like Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka and others. But for the *Śuddhādvaita* or the system of Pure Monism of Vallabha exhibiting an unswerving and emboldened faith in the reality of world and its creation the problem of difference had serious implications. We shall, however, undertake an exposition of the way in which the Vallabhites explained the category of 'difference' in harmony with the basic tenets of their philosophical system with a faith in a purely monistic character of the Ultimate Reality as well as in the reality of world along with all its 'difference' or the five types of 'difference' (*pañcabheda*) as preached in the Mādhva School.

The notion of 'difference' has always a dual aspect; firstly, the faith in its objective and external truth and, secondly, the subjective cognition of this 'difference' as an objective fact. Almost all the realists who favoured the truth of 'difference' as an objective fact in external world disclosed their approbation of the representationalist standpoint that the cognition of difference is a real and truthful presentation of objective

phenomena to knowledge. To them, both the subjective and objective aspects of the category of difference are true beyond any shadow of doubt. Śrī Vallabha's ultimate philosophical position that there is no reality other than Brahman, that the world being His manifestation, is, was and shall continue to be Brahman created a situation in which the absolute truth of 'difference' either in external world or in subjective mind could not be recognised. Though he and his followers vehemently confuted the Śaṁkarite refutation of the category of difference and their assertion that it is only superimposed on Brahman by the inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) principle of *Avidyā* or *Māyā,* they were none-the-less disagreeable to acknowledge the reality of 'difference' with a connotation that is accorded to it in the philosophical systems of Madhva, Bhāskara, Rāmānuja and Nimbārka. They, therefore, treaded a middle path formulating that the objective fact of difference is only a manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) caused by Brahman's inscrutable Will which shall be withdrawn and concealed when He so desires — and is, therefore, not permanently real — whereas the subjective cognition of 'difference' is only an unreal phenomenon caused by *Avidyā* or *Māyā*. It is a fact that belongs to *saṁsāra* and not to *prapañca*.

Vallabhite position a middle path.

'Difference' as it is objectively available in external-world is normally of the following three kinds :

Three kinds of difference and their status.

(1) Difference as mutual-negation (*anyonyā-bhāva*) between the substrate (*āśraya*) and the counter-entity (*pratiyogin*).

(2) Difference as dissimilarity (*vaidharmya*) between two entities.

(3) Difference between the cause (*kāraṇa*) and its effect (*kārya*).

An examination of these three ideas of 'difference' would reveal that the first two, viz., 'mutual-negation' and 'vaidharmya' are so inter-related that the one is inconceivable without the other. As Sarvajñāta-muni, one of the chief exponents of Advaita Vedānta, remarked in his *Saṁkṣepaśārīraka*,[1] the concept of mutual-negation always depends on the idea of separation which in itself is always related to the concepts of 'locus' and the 'counter-entity'. Separation, on the other hand, presupposes the mutual-negation of the terms, i.e., the *dharmin* and the *pratiyogin* which explains that the ideas of 'mutual-negation' and 'separation' are interdependent and relative. We have already discussed,

1. *Saṁkṣepaśārīraka*, śloka (2, 106).

in detail, in our chapter, 'The Theory of Knowledge', that Vallabha and his followers who denounced the separate existence of all types of 'negations' (*abhāva*) regarded mutual-negation as nothing different from 'concealment' establishing its total identity with the positive fact of existence; all ideas of negations, according to them, are explicable on the basis of the theory of manifestation and concealment. The logical conclusion of this Vallabhite theory of negation is Śrī Vallabha's unambiguous announcement that 'difference' between the cause and the effect, in the sense of mutual-negation or separation, is only apparent and not real. All differences, as such, when contemplated against the background of the theory of manifestation and concealment are reduced to only one kind, i.e., the one subsisting between the cause and its effect. Not only this, the difference between the individual souls (*jīvas*) and Brahman is also a kind of cause-effect-difference since these conscious souls are also the manifestations of the *sat* (existent) and *cit* (conscious) aspects of Brahman. Thus all the three kinds of 'difference'- the difference between the names and forms, the difference between God and souls and the one between cause and effect are only the different aspects of the cause-effect variety.

Vallabhite explanation of difference.

Now the question is : What is the nature and status of this cause-effect-difference in objective phenomena in the light of Śrī Vallabha's Pure Monism? Vallabha was always hesitant in according a real status to 'difference' in his Ontology, yet, because he maintained that the cosmic-universe or *prapañca* — the elemental status (*ādhibhautika-rūpa*) of Brahman — is real he was constrained to recognise that 'difference' being a part of *prapañca* is not devoid of truth. As the universe is manifestation of and out of Brahman depending on His Divine Wish, the manifestation of 'difference' is also caused by His Will. The category of difference, as such, has its appearance depending exclusively on God's Will without any claim to independent function and truth (*aicchika*). The conception of Śrī Vallabha's Pure Monism is, therefore, not one of absolute identity but of an 'identity' that is tolerant of difference (*bhedasahiṣṇuabheda*) where difference is only wilful, a concept indicated by '*tādātmya*' — a term connoting not pure identity but identity inclusive of difference. The Vallabhites, therefore, assert that it is prudent to define identity as the 'negation of the cognition of difference'[1] than contemplating it as pure, homogeneous identity.

1. *Bhedābhedasvarūpanirṇaya* of Puruṣottama, included in *Vādāvali*, p. 21.

The concept of *bhedābheda* in Vallabha's philosophy.

This admission of 'difference' within the bosom of 'identity' may indicate Śrī Vallabha's averment to the doctrine of identity and difference (*bhedābheda*) preached so vehemently by Bhāskara, Rāmānuja and Nimbārka. It is true that he contemplated a relation of 'identity and difference' between a cause and its effect yet the position and status which he accorded to 'difference' in his *bhedābheda* differentiates his concept of 'identity and difference' from the other philosophers and exponents of Vedānta, a point clearly brought out by the Vallabhite refutation of the other forms of *Bhedābhedavāda*. Among the exponents of the *bhedābheda* view, as we know, Bhāskara emphasized that 'effects are in reality but stages of manifestation, modification and existence of the cause itself eventualised by association with limitative adjunct or *upādhi*'."The individual souls are in reality not different from God; they are but His parts, as the sparks of fire are parts of fire; but it is the peculiarity of these parts (*aṁśas*) of God, the souls, that though one with Him, they are under the influence of ignorance, desires and deeds from beginningless time."[1] Thus the whole world of matter and spirits, as an effect, is differentiated in Brahman, the cause, by the presence of such *upādhis* as the subtle-body, the *prāṇa* etc. 'Difference' in Bhāskara's philosophy of identity and difference is, therefore, *aupādhika* (caused by limitative adjunct) whereas identity is the real nature of the thing. The Nimbārkian recognition and assessment of the relation of identity and difference is, however, more emphatic in asserting the reality of difference, in the effect, than Bhāskara, To Nimbārka "identity (*abheda*) in jīva's relation of *bhedābheda* to God means 'that the existence, activities etc. of the Individual Self are all dependent upon the Lord. In the case of the non-conscious reality also when it is said 'Indeed all this is Brahman' what it means is that the whole non-conscious reality comes out of Him."[2] This indicates a clear emphasis, on the part of Nimbārka, on the reality and prominence of the difference of the effect from its cause, resounding the echo of Mādhva logic and its defence of difference. The Vallabhites, therefore, acclaim that the Nimbārkian position of *bhedābheda* is only

Refutation of the concept of *bhedābheda* of other schools.

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 6.
2. Mishra, Umesha : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 51.

as assertion of difference (*bheda*) where the true sense of identity as dictated in the Upaniṣadic-texts is totally lost. To the Vallabhites, the Nimbārkian interpretation of identity between God and souls either as dependence or similarity [1] of consciousness (*citsādharmya*) is indicative of the truth that to them it is 'difference' that is real and prominent (*vāstava*) and not 'identity' as against the Vallabhite contention that the real purport of the *śrutis* is the judgement that identity or *abheda* alone is true. The Nimbārkian position is, therefore, a different version of the Mādhva pluralism where the souls are treated as the parts (*aṁśa*) of Brahman on the analogy of father and son where the son though an *aṁśa* of the father is quite different from him. For various reasons the Vallabhites discard [2] Mādhva pluralism and assert that it is an invalid doctrine and an unfaithful interpretation of the *śrutis*. Firstly, it violates the *Chāndogya* dictum that by the knowledge of one all can be known which clearly postulates that the Ultimate Reality is one and not many. Secondly, the philosophy of absolute difference between God and souls can never satisfactorily answer such ethical questions as the presence of pleasure and pain, good and evil, higher and lower dispensation and the cruelty meted out to the souls on earth, which can, however, be faithfully explained on the foundations of a philosophy of Pure Monism that explains the world as a manifested effect of Brahman, the World-Cause.

Identity and difference is a whole-part relation.

Vallabha, therefore, declared that the 'effect' is non-different from the 'cause' in the sense that it is a manifestation of the 'cause'; as such, the relation of identity and difference should always be comprehended as a cause-effect-relation termed also as *aṁśāṁśibhāva* or 'whole and part relation'. In this interpretation of *bhedābheda*, difference is only a wilful manifestation of the cause, the Ultimate Reality, having no claim either to freedom or eternality of formal (as effect) persistence. As declared by the *śruti*, "It is earth that is true, all products (*vikāra*) are mere expressions of language". All name and form in this universe are merely manifestations, though real and not false, of Brahman. As all cosmic manifestation is a projection of

1. Because both God and souls possess consciousness as an attribute there is a similarity between them. It is on the basis of this similarity that the *śrutis* speak of *abheda* between Jīva and Brahman.
2. *Bhedābhedasvarūpanirṇayaḥ* included in *Vādāvali*, p. 18 to 20.

Brahman's inscrutable power called *Māyā*, the relation between Brahman and His power or Māyā may also be contemplated as one of identity and difference or *bhedābheda* because here also the power is non-different from the powerful. Such a relation as the one subsisting between the 'substance' (*dharmin*) and the 'attribute' (*dharma*) is also one of identity and difference but here one has to be cautious that the 'attribute' has no separate existence or identity apart from its 'substance' or 'ground'. Vallabha illustrates this point by citing the example of the 'sun' and its 'sunshine' where the substrate of 'light'[1] is in no way different from it. It is only in such cases, where there is an unfailing and invariable relation between the attribute and its substrate (*avinābhāva*) that *bhedābheda* in the Vallabhite sense is admissible. All such instances as the relation between the cause and the effect, the class (*jāti*) and the individual are the examples of *bhedābheda* because they demonstrate an unfailing and invariable relation (*avinābhāva*) between them. However, if there is an emphasis on 'attribute' as different from its substance or 'substrate', as in the philosophy of Nimbārka, *bhedābheda* is unsustainable.

Śrī Vallabha's unequivocal assertion demonstrating the objective and *pāramārthika* reality of difference, through the philosophy of wilful manifestation of the Supreme Reality of Brahman, as against the Śaṁkarite averment that all names and forms in the world with their differences are false (*mithyā*) and superimposed may induce us to believe that the subjective cognition of all difference, whether pertaining to name and form, God and soul, or cause and effect is also true and a valid representation of truth and Reality. But such an expectation is soon belied. In his commentary on the *sūtra* '*Dṛśyate tu*'[2] and his *Subodhinī* on Canto III of *Śrībhāgavata* we have a clear statement that the 'difference between the effect and cause is only perceptible'. Puruṣottama while explaining this text in his *Prakāśa* clarifies that *vailakṣaṇya* which is the difference[3] of the one from the other is only cognised; not that it is (i.e., it is real). This cognition of 'difference' is caused and conditioned by nescience (*avidyā*), a product of Brahman's deluse *Māyā*. It is a fundamental statement of Vallabhite philosophy that whereas the name and form are real, the knowledge of the difference subsisting between them is *āvidyaka*-caused by ignorance and is,

1. Prakāśāśrayavadvā. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 28 with *Prakāśa*).
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 1, 6) with *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 556.
3. *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 1, 6), p. 557.

therefore, unreal; same is the case with the other kinds of knowledge of difference between God and soul and cause and effect.

This exposition of the philosophy of 'difference' creating an unbridgeable gulf between the natures of the objective and the subjective aspects of 'difference' may appear really paradoxical; yet, a proper understanding of the real meaning and purport of the *māyika* character of the 'knowledge of difference' may resolve the apparent paradox and put in full view the proper Vallabhite formulation of this concept.

Śrī Puruṣottama in his *Prakāśa* [1] on the sūtra '*Dṛśyate tu*' explains, in detail, the statement that 'the knowledge of difference is *māyika* or *āvidyaka*'. According to him, *Māyā* the inscrutable power or capacity of Brahman, remaining unified and non-separated with Him like the moon-beams in water, formulates itself in different forms and results in such various deployments as external-world, the individual-soul, etc. along with innumerable attributes and differences. Through its concealing (*āvaraka*) and creative (*vikṣepa*) powers it manifests unconsciousness, (*jaḍatva*), *mohatva*, *tucchatva* etc. in Matter whereas through its own forms as *avidyā* it creates a sense of distinction or difference in the subjective apprehension of the individual-soul due to which it perceives all effects in the cosmos as different from their inherent-cause. Though the effects are the real formations of the cause in the sense that they are just the different aspects or situations of the cause yet the individual soul when it apprehends these effects as different and in isolation from the cause is guilty of a misconception. The reason of this misapprehension, according to Vallabhism is that *Māyā*, during the course of its deployings creates a false objectivity (*viṣayatā*) of 'difference' occurring [2] in between the 'subject' and the real-object, i.e., *prapañca* (*āntarālikī*). As remarked by the author of *Prameyaratnārṇava*, 'difference' like origination [3], destruction and depravity has its existence only in cognition and not in truth; it subsists only in experience. The real truth about the Vallabhite position is their emphatic assertion that those fortunate and sublime souls who always perceive the world as the homogeneous (*ekarasa*) Effulgent and Blissful Brahman, like the goldsmith who sees every ornament only as gold

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 558 to 562.
2. Evaṁ sati bhāne eva bhedaḥ na svarūpe.
3. Ye punaḥ utpattivināśakutsitatvabhedādayo dharmāḥ pratīyante te māyikāḥ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 19. Hindi Edition).

in utter disregard of its form as necklace, ear-ring, etc., without any sense of difference and other attributes associated with Matter have a true vision and comprehension of Truth; all others who view the universe otherwise are all ignorant. Goswāmi Giridhar Mahārāja elucidates this point when he mentions in his *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa* [1] that there are three kinds of *adhikāris* or seekers after truth, the superior (*uttama*), the lowest (*kaniṣthāḥ*) and the middle-ones. The superior ones view the world as Brahman Himself; the middle-ones apprehend it as like Brahman whereas the lowest ones conceive of this world as distinct from God who is its creator. The difference in the standpoints of the superior and the middle ones is this: In the vision of the superior *adhikāris* the world is not cognised as different from *Saccidānanda* Brahman, whereas, in the standpoint of the middle-ones the separate identity of the world is cognised though it is apprehended as consisting of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, the attributes of Brahman. It is this second or the middle standpoint that asserts that Brahman by its own Wish deploys Himself as the universe. All philosophy of the *tādātmya* of the effect with the cause and the recognition of 'identity tolerant of difference' as explicated by Śrī Vallabha and Śrī Puruṣottama, in their works, is an exposition from this middle-standpoint, for this second grade of seekers after truth. The only and the correct position is the Pure Non-dualism (*śuddhādvaita*) of Brahman with His intrinsic attributes whose integral vision is the privilege of the top-most supreme seekers after truth; the other two standpoints displaying the cognition of difference (*bheda*) are always governed and caused by nescience. Yet, even in the highest state of supreme spiritual experience the individual soul's experience of identity with Brahman has its basis in its perception of the utmost [2] similarity and non-apprehension of duality with Brahman according justification to the contention that as long as Brahman's Will sustains the manifestation of soul's 'difference' will have to persist.

1. *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, ślokas 29 to 36 with *Prakāśa* commentary of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa.
2. Paramamuktidaśāyāmpi... kāṭhakaśrutyā ātmanobrahmasāmyaśravaṇāt bhinnapratītyabhāvarūpa eva abhedo na tu bhedābhāvarūpa iti sidhyati.
(*Bhedābhedasvarūpanirṇayaḥ*, p. 20-21.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCEPTION OF MĀYĀ

Meaning of the word '*Māyā*'.

In most of the Vedāntic systems of philosophy the conception of *Māyā* has been employed and utilised for explaining the phenomenalization of the transcendent and the unconditioned Absolute. Even in the *Ṛg Veda,* the word (*māyā*) is used predominantly in the sense of creative power to indicate and demonstrate its function in the manifestation of the cosmic universe. The other etymological meanings and uses of *māyā* such as 'magic power' in the Brāḥmaṇic [1] literature or 'divine power' as in the *Gītā* and some important Upaniṣads, or in the sense of wonder and trick found profusely in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Purāṇas* also point in the direction that creative power is the basis and the fundamental connotation of the '*māyā*' derived from the root '*mā*' meaning to create, resulting in its use as the principle responsible for world-creation. However, its basic nature and its position in the scheme of Truth and Reality has been explained differently and modified by each philosopher in accordance with his theory of Ultimate Reality and his conception of world and its creation. Consequently, to some like Gauḍapāda and Śaṁkara who stressed that the world-order is an unreal superimposition on the indeterminate and partless Reality of Brahman, *māyā* as a phenomenal principle became a power of delusion whose nature could not be explained in terms of either *sat* (real) and *asat* (unreal); it remained altogether inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*). On the other hand, those who conceived of the Ultimate Truth, the Brahman, as Concrete Personalised Individual with divine and celestial attributes and the world as His real creation, philosophised that *Māyā* is an inexplicable and inscrutable power of the Lord or Brahman which sets out the stupendous process of world-creation.

The students of Indian philosophy are well aware that Gauḍapāda

1. Bhaṭṭa, G.H. : *Śrī Vallabhācārya and His Doctrines*, p. 41.

Advaitic theory of *Māyā*.

and Śaṁkara introduced the conception of *Māyā* as an inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) principle — different from both real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*) — responsible for world-superimposition and its appearance without implying the reality of creation at all. This cosmic principle whose existence can be apprehended through none of the moulds or categories of logic is a link between the indeterminate, quality-less, pure and infinite consciousness of Brahman and the determinate, qualified, impure and limited appearance of phenomena. Not only is the *Māyā* a creative principle projecting the world-appearance, it is also a principle of deception which does not allow the individual souls (*jīvas*), that are in reality not different from Brahman, to realize themselves as identical with Brahman. Though the two powers of deception (*vikṣepaśakti*) and concealment (*āvaraṇaśakti*) belong to the same principle they have acquired different names in Advaitic philosophy — the former being called *māyā* and the latter *avidyā* notwithstanding the fact that they are very often used as synonyms in Advaitic literature. Thus the term '*māyā*' is used in the Śaṁkarite system in the sense of 'illusion' or 'unreality' and the principle governing this illusory creation is *Māyā* like the *māyā* of the magician.

Rāmānujite and Nimbārkian conceptions of *Māyā*.

To Rāmānuja the Śaṁkarite interpretation of '*māyā*' is completly illogical in as much as all cognitions, whether true or untrue, have a real cognitum as their object; even dreams and illusions are explained to be real. Whenever the Upaniṣadic-texts and other scriptures use the term '*māyā*' they always employ it in the sense of 'wondrous creation'[1] or Prakṛti. As Rāmānuja clearly asserts, in his *Śrībhāṣya*, the word *māyā* denotes 'wonder'[2] and because the *Prakṛti* with its three *guṇas* is the instrument through which God effects his wonderful and stupendous creation, the term '*māyā*' [3]denotes *Prakṛti* as well. To him the Śaṁkarite usage has no support or example anywhere in the *śrutis*. Nimbārka who was also an advocate of *satkhyātivāda* meaning [4] that all knowledge is produced by existent objects which are regarded as

1. Māyāvicitrasṛṣṭikaratvāt. (*Tattvatraya*, p. 40).
2. Māyāmātraṁ paraṁ puruṣasṛṣṭaṁ ityarthaḥ. Māyā śabdo hi āścaryavācī. (*Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 3)
3. Rangarāmānuja's commentary on *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, mantras (4, 9-10)
4. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 410.

its cause, however, differed; he explained that the term '*māyā*' like '*avidyā*' is used in the *śrutis* "in the sense of the souls' deeds of the past *(Karman)* and not as false-knowledge or illusory appearance";[1] because God recreates this world after dissolution in accordance with the beginningless *adṛṣṭa* or past *karmas* that the causality of *māyā* is contemplated in scriptural texts.

Mādhva standpoint.

In Madhva, however, the conception of *māyā* as a supra-rational power of God has its prominent projection. In his philosophy, *māyā* is recognized as a mysterious and inscrutable power of God (*acintyaśakti*) through which He can create, sustain and destroy the world-order and wield his sceptre over all substances dependent on Him. Not only this, his power is also invested with the power of concealment by which it dupes individual souls by causing their illusions and mistakes (*vyāmohana*). *Māyā* thus, in Mādhva Philosophy, has a twofold capacity and function; one which is instrumental in world-creation and the other which creates the persistent deception of the souls. Vādirāja, one of the main exponents of Mādhva philosophy and religion, urges, in his *Yuktimallikā*,[2] that *māyā* has three alternative suggestions; firstly, it means the desire of Īśvara (*icchāśakti*), secondly, it stands for *jaḍa-prakṛti* and, lastly, it implies that particular aspect of *māyā* which is the cause of jīva's illusion called *ajñāna*. It is with these three different meanings that this word is used in the Upaniṣads and other scriptures.

Vallabhas's theory of *Māyā* as Brahman's Power.

Vallabhācārya in his *Prakāśa* on *Tattvadīpanibandha* defines *māyā*[3] as Brahman's power residing in Him, by which He can become everything and anything whatsoever. Just as a man's capacity or power to act is inseparably inherent in him, *māyā*,[4] the power or the capacity of Brahman, is contained in and identified with Him. It is through this capacity that Brahman, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at His Divine Will starts the process of world-creation wherein

1. Mishra, Umesha : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 42.
2. *Yuktimallikā*, Chapter II, ślokas 170 to 173.
3. Māyā hi bhagavataḥ śaktiḥ sarvabhavanasāmarthyarūpā tatraiva sthitā. Yathā puruṣasya karmakaraṇādausāmarthyaṁ tena svasāmarthyena anyānupajivanena svātmarūpaṁ prapañcaṁ kṛtavān iti phalitaṁ.
(*T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 77).
4. Māyāśaktirbhagavataḥ. (*Subodhinī*, XI, 3, 3, 1).

māyā through its functioning sets the wheel of onward formulations and manifestations (*āvirbhāva*) in motion without any assistance from any other principle because there is no other than Brahman, the *Saccidānanda*, in his *nirguṇa* and transcendent state. As soon as there arises a wish in God to be many *māyā*, His power, is aroused, as if from slumber, to restart and rejuvinate the process of creation. The first function it undertakes in this direction, in the beginning of creation, is to conceal Brahman's all-pervasiveness- referred to as His *tirodhānaśakti*- introducing [1] limitation in His otherwise essential pervasiveness. Through the manifestation of limitation in Brahman it becomes the instrument of the projection of both souls and matter from His two aspects, namely, Consciousness and Existence involving the distinction between the 'subject' and the 'object' which was previously non-existent. And then the whole universe is gradually manifested in its full bloom and diversity. This aspect of *māyā* or Brahman's power involved in the process of cosmic-creation is nomenclatured '*Yogamāyā*'. As commented upon by Vallabha in his *Sobodhinī*, "That power of God (Brahman) which is the cause of world is *Yoga-māyā*." [2]

Māyā's function in world-creation.

There is, however, another aspect of *māyā*'s functioning which is responsible for the delusion of the individial souls about their true and essential natures; it is this aspect of *māyā* which creates in them the ideas of duality, egoism, separation from Brahman and all that is the characteristic of *saṁsāra*. As we shall discuss, in detail, in another chapter of this book, Vallabha philosophised that there is a difference between *saṁsāra*, the subjective understanding of the individual soul, and the *prapañca* or the cosmic world-order. Whereas *prapañca* is a real creation out of Brahman's own Self caused by *māyā*, the creative power, the *saṁsāra* is an unreal conceptual apprehension of the individual soul caused by the delusive aspect of Brahman's *māyā* known [3] as *vyāmohikā-māyā*. It is to this aspect of *māyā* that the *Bhāgavata* [4]

1. Brahmaṇo vyāpakatvaṁ, vṛhattvāt...ātmaramaṇānantaraṁ tirohitamiva bhavati iti māyayā tāḍśabhāvaḥ. (T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 91.) with *Āvaraṇabhaṁga* commentary).
2. Yā jagatkāraṇabhūtā bhagavacchaktiḥ sā yogamāyā. (*Subodhinī* on ślokas X, 2, 5 and III, 6, 35).
3. *Prameyaratnāṛṇava*, khyātiviveka, p. 253.
4. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (II, ৩, 33).

refers when it describes : "The apprehension of things not in their own nature but differently from what they really are is an effect of this *māyā* like *ābhāsa* or *tamas* (darkness)." It is this *vyāmohikā-māyā* which unfurls itself as nescience or the *avidyā* of the jīva. It is an important aspect of Vallabhite philosophy that it treats avidyā, like vidyā, not as the power of the individual soul but as the power of Brahman and as such it is also recognised as an aspect of *vyāmohikā-māyā*. All delusion, infatuation, ignorance [1] and absence of true cognition in man is an effect of the deluding and enticing operation of this aspect of *māyā*. Thus the Vallabhites recognise, very much like the Śaṁkarites, *vikṣepaśakti* and *āvaraṇaśakti*, the two aspect of *māyā* that are instrumental in the manifestative evolution of the world-order (*prapañca*) and concealment of the real nature of Brahman and the individual souls which is ultimately responsible for the deprivation of its essential powers (*aiśvarya*) leading to its involvement in the endless cycle of *saṁsāra*. Yet we have to be cautious in this comparison. Whereas the Śaṁkarite *vikṣepaśakti* projects an unreal world, the creative *māyā* of the Vaiṣṇavite system evolves and manifests a real world on the person of Brahman and is Brahman Himself.

Avidyā as power of Brahman.

A question is often raised : Are the various powers of *māyā* different or are they aspects of a single principle? Again, is *māyā* representative of the overall capacity of Brahman or is it only one of His diverse and infinite powers? In his *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*,[2] Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja raises these questions and replies that Vallabhism contemplates of a single *māyā* as the overall capacity (*sāmarthya*) of Brahman which on account of its different manifestations is named differently. Just as in a single banyan-seed the powers of the innumerable banyan trees is contained in a latent form, the *māyā* of Brahman is also one; it is through its power that it transforms itself in different ways. This single *māyā* representing Brahman's capacity displays the duality of the individual soul and the Lord, the knower and the known, and then itself becomes the creative *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. Thus the Vallabhite conception of *Māyā* is a resuscitation [3] of the view

Māyā is one; it has different manifestations.

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 559.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Vidyāvidye hareḥ śaktī māyayaiva vinirmite.
(T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, śloka 31)

that it is prudent to contemplate of a single power or capacity of Brahman and then relate all other powers as its various manifestations than to conceive of an infinite variety of powers subsisting in the Ultimate Reality, the Brahman. Though Vallabha differentiates between *māyā* and *avidyā* as two separate powers on the authority of the *Bhāgavata* where there is a mention of the twelve powers of God, yet this is only to emphasise that the aspect of the Godhead's unitary power motivating and sustaining the process of world-creation is different from the one that is causative of the subjective ignorance and the misrepresentation of truth to the individual soul, the *avidyā*, and not to demolish the validity of the conception that they are the two aspects of God's power by which He can become almost all and everything and be the repository of contradictory attributes. Vallabha himself clarifies this point and asserts that 'the *avidyā* with its five knots residing in the jīva is a creation of māyā'.[1] The *Bhāgavata* too repeatedly emphasises the irrefragable character of this theory when it contends that both *vidyā* and *avidyā*[2] (knowledge and ignorance) are created by Lord's *Māyā* or that Brahman's divine (*ādhidaivika*)[3], the spiritual (*ādhyātmika*) and the elemental (*ādhibhautika*) forms and the three guṇas, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, employed in the creation of the universe, are an effect of the instrumental causality of *māyā*. Śrī Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa very clearly asserts this point when he writes, "*Vyāmohikā-māyā* is only a form of the *Māyā* that is capable of being anything and everything whatsoever; therefore, there is a mention of the vision of only one *Māyā* occurring to Vyāsa in his Samādhi."[4]

Nature of Māyā in Vallabhism.

The next and probably the most important quesion is : What is the nature of *Māyā* in Vallabha's Pure Non-Dualism? Is it real or is it inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*), i.e., different from both real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*) like the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. The acceptance of the first alternative is beset with the possibility of dualism whereas the second may establish in the end that *māyā* is only *mithyā* or false. Any assent in favour of the second alternative is, however, impossible for Vallabhism is not only antagonistic to the philosophy

1. T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, śloka 24.
2. *Śribhāgavata*, śloka (XI, 11, 3).
3. *Ibid*, ślokas (II, 5, 18 to 19).
4. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Khātiviveka, p. 253.

of the falsity of world and the inexplicable character of *māyā* but is also one of its most vehement and puissant critics. Vallabha and his followers, therefore, emphasised that *māyā* being the capacity and the power of Brahman is as real as Brahman Himself: yet they were vigilant in disallowing *māyā* a status that might introduce either the dualism of the power and the powerful or renegate the powerful itself to a state of functional nullity as in the Śākta system. Vallabha, therefore, contemplated of *māyā* as a power in the sense of capacity so that it could not be conceptually distinguished from Brahman; the distinction between a person and his capacity exists not in reality but only in the perverse, partial intellectual conception of the human mind. In truth, the relation between *māyā* and Brahman, being trascendental, is beyond human understanding; it is why the '*māyā*' is conceived even by the Vallabhites as an unthinkable and supra-rational power of God, a point that has ben prominently emphasised by Jīva Goswāmījī Mahārāja of the Caitanya School.

Māyā as *ṣaḍaiśvaryayukta* and *triguṇātmikā*.

Though the real nature of *māyā*, the inconceivable and supra-rational power of the transcendental and supreme Personality of Godhead, is beyond the human ken yet when the Vallabhites, like other Vaiṣṇavites, conceive of Brahman's six celestial (*aprākṛta*) and ideal attributes (*guṇas*) they also recognise *māyā*, the capacity of Brahman, to be associated with them. As we have observed, it is through the *unmeṣa* [1] or the opening of eyes of *māyā*, like the appearance of lightning in the sky, that the motionless ocean of the Absolute is stirred to manifest the essential and inherent attributes in their forms as *guṇas* or attributes of Brahman- a situation technically called the *guṇonmeṣadaśā*. Later on in the process of evolution the *māyā* comes to acquire the three *guṇas*, viz., the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, both in their pure and impure forms. The Vallabhites, therefore, conceive of *māyā* as *ṣaḍaiśvaryayukta* and *triguṇātmikā*.

Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja explains the nature of *māyā* by citing the scriptural text that contends : "It (*māyā*) is brilliantly painted, strong, creative of many seeds, consisting of the manifested *guṇas*, both in itself and in its procreations, appearing in the form of the three deities— Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra — and illuminated by the Consciousness of Brahman". [2] The text deeply demonstrates that *māyā* is the cause of

1. Schrader : *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 34.
2. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 560.

the variety, the insentience, the ignorance, the manifoldness and the depravity of all phenomenal existence. The term '*bahvāṁkura*' or the procreator of innumerable sprouts is suggestive of the truth that *māyā* is the cause of the gradual evolution of expansion of the world-order till the creation of the last particular (*vyaṣṭi*). *Māyā* is also the cause of Brahman's descent in the form of the three deities. Yet, it would be a blunder to imagine that *māyā* by itself is sufficiently capable of all these functions. All these activities are possible only when it (i.e. Māyā) is illumined by the Consciousness [1] of Brahman (*caitanya-dīpta*). Vallabhism, therefore, asserts that all these functions of *māyā*, as the power of Brahman, are really the functions of Brahman. They, therefore, contend that the real material as well as the instrumental cause of the world-order is Brahman and not *māyā* as contemplated in some of the philosophical systems that in their zeal of attributing superiority to 'power' in comparison to the 'powerful' renegate Brahman to a subsidiary position. *Māyā* is only an instrument of revelation (*darśayitṛ*) whereas Brahman is the cause and the agent of cosmic-creation.

Māyā an instrument of revelation.

Here it is necessary and expedient to mention two other characteristics about the nature of phenomenal creations of *māyā*. Firstly, they are not absolutely illusory like the creations of the magician as contemplated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. They are not illusions but are *ābhāsas* and *ābhāsa*, as explained by Vallabha, is not absolutely unreal [2] just as a Brāhmaṇa of loose conduct called *brāhmaṇābhāsa* is not unreal. They are merely the middle-creations or *āntarālikī-sṛṣṭi* occasioned through the causality of *māyā*, for example, the 'objectivity' in case of illusions or dreams. Secondly, *māyā* is not a limitative adjunct (*upādhi*) as conceived in Śāṁkara Vedānta; it indistinguishably subsists with Brahman, as his power, like the moonbeams [3] in the crystal waters of a lake. However, it becomes the *upādhi* of the parts (*aṁśas*) of Brahman, the jīvas, to introduce in them a sense of difference from God and other phenomenal qualities like ignorance, infatuation etc.

Notwithstanding all this discussion about *māyā*, the Vallabhite philosophy is hesitant to impart it any independent status. As a matter

1. *Ibid*, p. 560
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 50).
3. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 560.

of fact it is Brahman who functions to be many through *māyā* but does not become many. All apparent change and phenomenalization is only functional or practical (for *vyavahāra*); in reality, it is always Brahman in His transcendental and pure status. This is why the Upaniṣadic seers did not lay much emphasis on the instrumentality of *māyā* for explaining the world-creation which was, however, employed and emphasized in the Paurāṇika treatment of the subject. Yet there is no difference, according [1] to Vallabha, in these two accounts of the same subject, the Vedic and the Paurāṇika. Whereas, according to the Vedic authorities the Brahman Himself becomes the world without any aid, the *Purāṇas*, emphasize that He takes the assistance of His own power, the *māyā* (*māyāśakti*). It is just like [2] manufacturing a golden ornament in two ways; one, by the use of hammer and other instruments, and the other by the process of putting molten gold in blocks. In both cases, the ornament pruduced is gold put into different shapes. Likewise, it should be remembered that the world remains an aspect of Brahman; it is only the explanation that is different.

The Vedic and the Paurāṇika interpretations.

Thus it is obvious that the main Vallabhite usage of the term '*māyā*' is in the sense of God's essential, supra-rational and transcendent power. Yet, the word is also used in Vāllabha Vedānta with several other connotations. As observed by Bālakṛṣṇa Bhatta, [3] the word '*māyā*' is used by the intellectuals with five different meanings, viz., (1) God's power to be anything and everything (2) the magician's power to create illusions, (3) deceit, (4) *vyāmohikā-māyā* and (5) *prapañca*. Out of these five, the Vallabhites, on the authority and usage in *Śrībhāgavata* use '*māyā*' in three different senses, viz., (1) the power of Brahman to be anything and everything, (2) in the sense of *vyāmohikā-māyā* and (3) *prapañca*. *Vyāmohikā-māyā*, as we have observed, is one of the two aspects of the same *māyā* and is, therefore, rightly denoted by the term '*māyā*'. Because in the Paurāṇika interpretation the world-order is conceived and explained through the instrumentality of *māyā*—supposed to be associated with Brahman's material causality on the analogy of the molten gold put into blocks — the world-order and *prapañca* being permeated by *māyā* is also indicated by the term '*māyā*'.

1. T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 75 to 77.
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Khyātiviveka, p. 261.
3. *Ibid*, p. 255.

Thus, though the word '*māyā*' is used in Vallabhite philosophy in any of these three senses yet the primary meaning and conception of *māyā* is that it is the power of Brahman or *Kṛṣṇa* by which He starts His play. As remarked by Śrī Aurobindo, "*Māyā* meant for them (the Vedic seers) the power of infinite consciousness to comprehend, contain in itself and measure out, that is to say, to form — for form is limitation— Name and Shape out of the vast illimitable Truth of Infinite existence. It is by *Māyā* that the static truth of essential being becomes ordered truth of active being."[1] So to Vallabha *māyā* is the power by which the Infinite Truth of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss activates Itself into world-phenomena, which is none other but its own status.

1. Śri Aurobindo : *Life Divine*, p. 108.

CHAPTER IX

THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDIVIDUAL SOUL

(A) THE NATURE OF JĪVĀTMAN

Consciousness both as the essence and the attribute of the Self.

In our chapter, 'The Theory of Knowledge', we have discussed the Vallabhite theory that consciousness is both the inherent nature (*svarūpa*) and the attribute of the individual soul. To the Vallabhites, the Sāṁkhya doctrine of Self as pure and transcendental consciousness and the Nyāya theory asserting that it is a substance containing consciousness as an attribute are both a gross misunderstanding of the real and essential nature of the individual soul. The two theories present only a one-sided and partial view of the essential nature of Self which, as the Vallabhites conceive, has consciousness for its essence (*svarūpa*) as well as its attribute (*guṇa*). The concept of *caitanya* as an attribute of jīva is characterised with the presence of invariable relationship between the soul and the *caitanya* or consciousness entailing that the very existence of the individual soul is impossible without *caitanya*. This invariable relationship between the substance and its attribute (*avinābhāva*) is the real intention of the Vallabhite contention that consciousness is the *svarūpa* or the essential nature of the jīva. As contended by Vallabha, both the doctrines-the one preaching that consciousness is the very nature of the jīva and the other that it is its attribute — are equally acceptable for there is absolutely no difference between them. To conceive of the soul as of the nature of illuminating consciousness is almost the same thing as imagining that the soul is revealed by consciousness, its attribute. Just as the 'sun' and its 'sunshine' are not different, there is an identity between consciousness as an attribute and consciousness as an essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the jīva. The nature of the individual soul or Self, from both the standpoints, is, therefore, consciousness as verily asserted in the *śrutis* that speak of the Self as *vijñānamaya* or *jyotirmaya*.

We have also observed, in our discussion, that the jīva in its pristine and original state prior to creation is of the nature of pure transcendental consciousness and that it is only at the stage of the first deployment that consciousness, though eternal, manifests itself in its attributive aspect. It is at this stage that Brahman manifests Himself as the knower or the subject of His own consciousness. The manifestation of the individual soul being a fact of creation, its consciousness may be conceived both as its very *svarūpa* or essence and as its attribute (*dharma*). However, in its subsequent deployings at the phenomenal or the empirical level, the employment of intellectual categories sharpens the manifestation of the schema of subject-object-relation and reveals knowledge — which is then produced — always in relation to a subject or a knower.

Emergence and creation of soul.

The Vallabhite philosophy of the nature of jīva as *caitanya* is a direct corollary of their doctrine of the creation or the manifestation of jīva from Brahman. As we have discussed in the chapter, 'The Statuses of Brahman', Vallabhism contemplates of the *Akṣara Brahman* as the ultimate cause and the ground of all subsequent transcendent and phenomenal evolutions. It is from this Immutable or *Akṣara* aspect of Brahman, predominated by the celestial and divine attribute of *sattva*, that the individual souls, consequent upon the concealment of Brahman's Effulgent Bliss, emerge out like sparks from blazing fire. As observed in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, "As from a fire, fully ablaze, fly off sparks, in their thousands, that are akin to the fire, similarly O! good-looking one, from the Immutable originate different kinds of creatures and into It again they merge." [1]

This particular mantra, which forms the basis of the Vallabhite philosophy of the creation of the emergence of souls, reveals and emphasises upon three important principles with regard to the nature of Self. Firstly, the emergence of the souls is from *Akṣara-Brahman*, secondly, the emergent effects, the jīvas, are similar in nature to the Immutable aspect of the Absolute and, thirdly, during this process of emergence and subsequent differentiation the souls lose much of their pristine glory. The Vallabhites, therefore, argue that from the *Saccid-ānanda* or the aspects of Being, Consciousness and Bliss of *Akṣara Brahman* are manifested Its innumerable parts called the souls, (jīvas)

1. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 1, 1).

which too are *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, at the time of emergence. But subsequently, due to the Wish of the Puruṣottama to be many, the part of the *sattva*-attribute clinging along with the jīva predominates and due to its preponderance the blissful aspect of the soul is instantly concealed. Thus in its appearance the soul only partakes of the two attributes or Braḥman, the Being (*sat*) and Consciousness (*cit*) concealing in its bosom the blissful aspect till this sheath of concealment is removed by His Divine Mercy.

Concealment of soul's bliss.

During their process of emergence the individual souls lose not only their title and right to Bliss but also the six celestial attributes, viz., *aiśvarya, vīrya, yaśa, śrī, jñāna* and *vairāgya* which they possessed prior to their manifestations as jivas by virtue of their identity with Brahman. On account of the Lord's Wish to initiate the process of His Divine Play these celestial attributes are concealed in order that all cosmic and phenomenal manifestations may be different and gradational. The concealment [1] of *aiśvarya* causes in jīva the sense of dependence and helplessness, the veiling of *vīrya* renders him capable of all kinds of sorrows and through the non-manifestation of *yaśa* he is always in want and in a state of destitution and deprivation. Due to the concealment of *Śrī* he is subjected to the sorrows and sufferings of birth, death, etc.; the concealment of *jñāna* endows him with the sense of ego, identification with body etc. and all kinds of false-knowledge. The concealment of *vairāgya* — which in Brahman means non-attachment — creates in the jīva the feeling of attachment towards the various objects. Thus the false knowledge of the individual souls and their attachment to worldly objects is a direct consequence of the veiling and concealment of the eternal and celestial attributes of *jñāna* and *vairāgya*. This whole process of concealment of the six divine attributes causing the phenomenalization of the individual souls is, so to say, a direct outcome of the concealment and deprivation of its pristine and original Bliss, the achievement of which, by God's Grace, brings the soul back to its lost empire. As Vallabha observes, the attainment of *brahmabhāva* or "the manifestation of Bliss (*ānanda*) in the jīva provides it with the vision of the millions of worlds." [2]

Soul's loss of six celestial attributes and its result.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 2, 5), p. 883 and *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 81.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, śloka 54.

Refutation of the objection against the theory of soul's emergence.

The philosophy of the manifestation and creation of individual souls from Brahman has often been suspected as a propagation of the theory of origination and, therefore, of the production, destruction, non-eternality and the mortality of the jīva which is against the preachings of the Vedic texts and the *Bhagavadgītā* that loudly proclaim that the Ātman is eternal, indestructible and immortal. How can the theory of the jīva's origination be reconciled with the basic and foundational concept of the Upaniṣadic philosophy that Ātman is always eternal?

Denial of Soul's origin or *utpatti*.

The Vallabhites denounce this objection as basically invalid and due to a serious misunderstanding of their philosophical position. Those philosophers who very often exhibit a propensity towards the theory of origination and destruction of soul have an innate tendency of identifying the 'soul' with the 'body' and attributing all the qualities of the 'body', viz., birth, death, mutation etc. to the soul. The Vallabhites who hold the testimony of the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavadgītā* in high esteem declare with full vigour that the 'soul' is always eternal, immortal and without any origin or *utpatti*. Vallabha, in his *Aṇubhāṣya* discusses [1] this point, in detail, and concludes that the scriptural texts nowhere speak of the origin of the jīva which is always eternal, indestructible and immortal. In the philosophy of the *vyuccaraṇa* of the jīva, as propagated in the Upaniṣads and systematically explained in Vallabha's Śuddhādvaita system, the word '*vyuccaraṇa*' means only manifestation and not origination. The term 'origination' is correlated with 'name and form' which are always absent at the stage when the process of jiva's individualisation starts; there is, therefore, no question of the origination (*utpatti*) of the jīva. Similarly, the idea of jīva's separation is also redundant because all manifestations and concealments have their occurrence in the Infinite Reality of Brahman to which there is no second. Goswāmī Viṭṭhalanātha discusses this problem at length and concludes that origination is a characteristic of the non-eternal and limited substances and not of those that are eternal [2] and unlimited. It is an essential property of 'origination' or 'production', that the entity produced is outside or external to its

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* p. 698.
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 96 with *Suvarṇasūtra*.

cause. But the jīva, though separated from Brahman, obtains the nature and attributes of Brahman—the Being and Consciousness—and as such any imputation of the property of 'origination' to the jīva is against the basic concept of the Upaniṣadic philosophy. The proper and the valid meaning of the term '*yuccaraṇa*', as intended in the *śruti*, is only manifestation (*prākaṭya*) and this is why the *Brahmasūtra* has emphatically asserted that jīva is only an *aṁśa* of Brahman. The Upaniṣadic seers were well aware of the difficulty of explaining the transcendental phenomenon of the separation of the souls from Brahman; as such, they explained it by the term '*aṁśa*' connoting manifestation.

The concept of soul as Brahman's *aṁśa*.

The use of this term in[1] the specific sense of manifestation implies such concepts as separation of the part (*aṁśa*) from the whole (*aṁśī*), the atomic nature of the part (*aṇutva*), the pervasiveness (*mahatva*) of the whole in relation to the part, the capability of the re-entry or dissolution of the part in the whole, the identity of the part and the whole after dissolution and the capability of the re-emergence of the part from the whole. These six different concepts about the relation of the jīva and Brahman are implied when the Upaniṣdic-texts explain the soul's creation and individualisation by the analogy of sparks flying off the blazing fire and the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā* pronouncing that the jīva is the *aṁśa* (part) of Brahman. The individual soul is, therefore, only manifested in Brahman and not produced or created; all ideas about its creation, origination, destruction etc. are only with reference to its body. The soul is thus indestructible, eternal, immortal, possessing the nature and attribute of Being and Consciousness with the capability of realizing its pristine Bliss after obtaining the realisation of Brahman or (*brahmabhāva*). As the proper understanding of the concept of jīva's *aṁśatva* or part-hood is important for a valid comprehension of its relation with Brahman in the context of the Vallabhite philosophy of Pure Monism, it is expedient that we scrutinize and discuss this problem a little at length to elaborate the implied meanings.

(B) THE *AṀŚATVA* OF JĪVA

The philosophy of the relation between the individual soul and the Ultimate Reality, the Brahman, which elucidates and explains the nature and the status of the soul has been described in the

1. *Ibid*, p. 96 and 98.

Aṁśatvādhikaraṇa of the *Brahmasūtra* where it is conceived to be a part (*aṁśa*) of Brahman, the Whole (*aṁśī*). This relation between the part and the whole (*aṁśāṁśibhāva*) has been explained variously by the different commentators of the *Brahmasūtra* in accordance with their ultimate philosophical positions. Śaṁkara, to whom there is no difference between the jīva and Brahman from the ultimate or the *pāramārthika* standpoint, argued that the question of the relation between the jīva and Brahman has its relevance — only in the pragmatic, the phenomenal or the *vyāvahārika* order of existence wherein the Brahman conditioned by the inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) *upādhi* of *avidyā*, appears as souls and matter. Thus the concept that the jīva is an *aṁśa* of Brahman implies the *aupādhika* character of the jīva so that it may not be contradictory to the basic tenet of Vedānta that Brahman is indeterminate and partless. Yet the Advaitins of the Śāṁkara School, unlike Bhāskara, are unwilling to acknowledge the real character of jīva's *upādhi* lest it may introduce dualism in their system. Whereas Bhāskara's philosophy of the individual-soul's appearance caused by a real *upādhi* (limitative adjunct) finally resulted in the relation of identity and difference between jīva and Brahman, the Advaitins by their emphasis on the *anirvacanīya* character of *avidyā*, the *upādhi*, concluded that the *aṁśāṁśibhāva* between jīva and Brahman is only imaginary or *kālpanika*. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Advaitasiddhi* [1] enumerates, in detail, the alternative interpretations of *aṁśatva* and concludes that the *kālpanika* character of *aṁśatva* is the only possibility that is logically tenable.

Śaṁkara's explanation of *aṁśāṁśibhāva*.

All other commentators of the *Brahmasūtra*, especially the Vaiṣṇavites of all hues, were alarmed at the Śaṁkarite interpretation of *aupādhika* character of the *jīvātman* and, the imaginary character of its relation to Brahman, as it struck a fatal blow at the basic foundations of their religious convictions; they, therefore, proclaimed with one voice that the Śaṁkarites were unfaithful interpreters of the *Brahmasūtra*. Rāmānuja contended that the individual soul, which is always ignorant, is the doer and enjoyer of action, is dependent and is subservient to the Will and the Control of the Lord, can never be identified with Him. In his philosophy of Qualified Monism (*viśiṣṭādvaita*), the souls, which by nature are

Rāmānuja's viewpoint.

1. *Advaitasiddhi*, p. 846.

always conscious and are the substrates of knowledge, form part of Brahman's Organic Whole; as such, for him the jīva is a real *aṁśa* of Brahman and not *aupādhika* as imagined by Śaṁkara or Bhāskara. He further explains this relation of the part and the whole as subsisting between jīva and Brahman on the analogy of quality [1] and qualified illustrating by such examples as the 'light' and the 'substrate of light', the power and the powerful, the body and its soul. Madhva and his followers, on the other hand, who were the protagonists of Pluralism and the philosophy of absolute difference between soul and God explained *aṁśāṁśi-bhāva*, by interpreting the jīva as the *anupādhika* — reflection (*prati-bimba*) of Brahman [2] like the appearance of rainbow. This *anupādhika* reflection or *svarūpopādhi*, which is an eternal and essential aspect of the soul, establishes its permanent difference from God and justifies its part-hood. Thus, according to Madhvites, because the jīva is a real and eternal reflection of Brahman, it is rightly treated in the *Brahmasūtra* as the *aṁśa* or the part of Brahman, the Whole. Nimbārka, however, disagreed with all the views that treated the soul either as a part or reflection of God. To him, the jīva is only a potency (*śakti*) of God, the Brahman, and as such the only plausible and satisfactory explanation of *aṁśāṁśibhāva* is to interpret the term '*aṁśa*' in the sense of potency or power. This interpretation, according to Nimbārka, is justified by the *śrutis* that tell; 'The jīva is the *aṁśa* of the Para'; 'This is the *śakti* of the Para'; 'Jīva is less powerful and dependent'. [3] Vijñānabhikṣu, however, interpreted the term '*aṁśa*' as the presence of a universal element (*sājātya*). Because the nature of the individual soul, as consciousness, is similar to that of Brahman, the former is contemplated as the part of the latter.

Mādhva explanation.

Nimbārka and others.

The Vallabhite concept of jīva's parthood (*aṁśatva*) is clearly brought out by Vallabha in his commentary on the sūtras of *aṁśādhikaraṇa* and Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*. Both of them are emphatic in their assertion that the phenomenal appearance of the soul as a real conscious existent in the context of the Pure and

Vallabhite interpretation of *aṁśatva*.

1. *Śrībhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 35).
2. Narain, K. : *An Outline of Mādhva Philosophy*, p. 144.
3. Mishra, Umesha. : *Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 47.

Concrete Monism of the Absolute or Brahman is possible only when the soul is recognised as the conscious manifestation of the Absolute, its ultimate inherent cause, seeking justification for the possibility of the appearance of difference in the otherwise concrete and attributive identity of Brahman. Not only this, there are six different aspects in which the jīva may be supposed to stand in relation to Brahman, as already mentioned by us above; these relational aspects are sustainable only when the jīva is supposed to be an *aṁśa* or the conscious manifestation of Brahman. As remarked by Vallabha, the jīva is an *aṁśa* of Brahman [1] because the *śrutis* speak of its plurality. The phrase '*nānāvyapadeśāt*' is interpreted in two ways; firstly, in the sense that the plurality of the individual souls is mentioned in the Scriptures (as contended by Vallabha) and, secondly, that the Upaniṣads describe the jīva with diverse attributes such as possessing [2] the characteristics of Brahman (*brahmatva*), or, again, as being 'ignorant'. Sometimes they tell that the jīva is ignorant, produced and formal; sometimes, they mention that it is dependent, controlled, and atomic and again they declare that it is all-pervasive (*vibhu*). Such a diverse description of the *jīva*, according to Viṭṭhalanātha, is the reason that it should be recognised as the *aṁśa* of Brahman. The real idea of the concept of *aṁśatva* is the possibility of the real manifestation of diversity and difference — howsoever contradictory to human intellect — within the Absolute Being or Truth. Both Vallabha and Viṭṭhalanātha were opposed to the conception of the conditioned or the *aupādhika* character of *aṁśa* and its subsequent renegation to the status of an imaginary existent (*kālpanika*) as advocated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. The Advaitin's endeavour in explaining the *aṁśatva* of the jīva as caused by the inexplicable and beginningless principle of *avidyā* either as the conditioning of Brahman on the analogy of ether as determined by the pot (*avacchedavāda*) or as the reflection of Brahman in *avidyā* (*pratibimbavāda*) are unsustainable because the Advaitin's concept of *avidyā* as a principle which has both for its ground (*āśraya*) and object (*viṣaya*) the reality and Consciousness of Brahman is illogical and untenable, a point to which we shall revert in another section of this chapter. Vallabha, thus, confuted the Advaitic philosophy of *āvidyaka*

Argument for jīva's *aṁśatva*.

1. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 3, 43).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 43) with *Prakāśa*.

and unreal character of jīva and, therefore, *aṁśatva* and sought to establish that the jīva is a real appearance whose proper explanation is possible only in accordance with the theory of manifestation and concealment.

The other Vaiṣṇavite interpreters like Rāmānuja, Madhva and others who none-the-less realized the importance of the reality of the *aṁśa* and the futility of its imaginary character, however, failed to arrive at the proper understanding of this concept as originally intended by the author of the *Brahmasūtra*. Notwithstanding Rāmānuja's explanation of *aṁśa* as an adjective or an attribute, the position of the jīva, in the Viśiṣṭādvaita system, within Brahman's Organism is an assertion and statement of jīva's absolute difference with Brahman, quite akin to the status and relation of the jīva to Brahman as available in Mādhva system. In both Rāmānuja and Madhva the *aṁśatva* or parthood of the jīva acquires a rigid character which is at variance with the scriptural intention that almost everything in phenomena, both Matter and Spirit, are manifested at the Will of the Lord through His Existence (*sat*) and Consciousness (*cit*) which, when He so wishes, are again dissolved in the Infinity of His Pure Being. Consciousness and Bliss. The Nimbārkian concept of *aṁśa* as mere potency is disliked by the Vallabhites simply because they, in their philosophical speculation, are unwilling to impart it a status apart from the 'potent'. The Vallabhites, therefore, maintain that the most logical and reasonable interpretation, in consonance with the real teachings of the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata* is to recognise that the *aṁśa* is a real manifestation of the Ultimate Reality which is capable of being almost everything at a time and is a repository of contradictory attributes, at His own sweet Will.

Reply to the objection that there can be no parts in Brahman.

It is often objected : How can Brahman which is partless be conceived as consisting of parts without involving the fallacy of contradiction? To this, both Vallabha and Viṭṭhalanātha retort that this is a transcendental problem which can be decided only by the verdict of the *śrutis*[1] and not by human reason and intellect. The *śrutis* and the *Brahmasūtras* are decisive on the point that the jīva is an *aṁśa* of Brahman; we have, therefore,

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 74.

no irrefragable argument to believe that it is not so. The Vallabhites, therefore, assert that the individual soul is an *aṁśa* of Brahman whose appearance can never be preached in a more justifiable and explicit way than on the analogy of the sparks emanating out of the blazing fire as done in the *Upaniṣads*. The meaning and the intention of the scriptural text is to be comprehended indicatively and not figuratively (*lakṣaṇā*) as done in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta.

All the philosophers of the different schools of Vaiṣṇavism, including Vallabha, were almost unanimous in their approach that the individual soul which by nature is an existent is 'different from body, the senses, the *manas*, the vital-breath and intellect, is conscious (i.e., not matter), blissful, eternal, atomic, non-manifested (*avyakta*), unthinkable (*acintya*), partless, (*niravayava*), immutable (*nirvikāra*), a substrate of knowledge (*jñānāśraya*) and controlled by God'. [1] Not only this, on the basis of experience, they also regarded it as subject to ignorance and as the agent and enjoyer of its actions. The Vallabhites too accepted these as the characteristics of the jīva notwithstanding their own interpretation of these attributes which sometimes was in disagreement with the explanations of the other schools. We have already discussed the Vallabhite philosophy of the nature of soul as consciousness and bliss whose aspect of 'bliss' is concealed for the time being. It is, however, impossible for human senses and mundane reason and the intellect of man to comprehend the real nature of soul in its fullness. As observed by Vallabha, the true nature of the Self is realizable only by three means, viz., the mind purified by the parctice of Yoga, the divine [2] vision by which God is realized and the gnosis or the spiritual vision of pure knowledge; the true nature of the soul, is, therefore, incomprehensible and unimaginable to the human intellect. Vallabha is also in agreement with the general Vaiṣṇavite thesis that the individual soul (jīva) is atomic in dimension. As the problem of the jīva's dimension had been treated as important not only in the commentary-period but also among the contemporaries and the predecessors of the author of the *Brahmasūtra*, we shall discuss this problem, at some length, to explain the Vallabhite arguments in favour of jīva's atomic dimension (*aṇutva*)

1. *Tattvatraya*, p. 4.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārika 55 and 56 with *Prakāśa*, p. 169&173.

(C) THE DIMENSION OF JĪVĀTMAN

Difference on approach.

In Indian philosophy the problem of the jīva's dimension has been solved in three different ways. Firstly, by contending that it is atomic (*aṇu*), as upheld by the different Vaiṣṇavite and Śaiva schools, secondly, by arguing that it possesses the dimension of physical organism (*madhyama-parimāṇa*) as conceived in Jaina philosophy and, thirdly, by philosophising that it is all-pervasive (*vibhu*) as contemplated in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya and the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta all of which quoted different Upaniṣadic texts to support their standpoints. In other words, the existence of such diverse and contradictory *śrutis* was one of the reasons for the heat that was generated on this problem leading, consequently, to a full length discussion in the *Brahmasūtra* on this question. Vallabha, in accordance with his fundamental doctrinal tenet that all questions regarding transcendent matters are to be decided on the basis of scriptural-texts and such reason as is faithful to them, was convinced that the problem of the soul's dimension should be discussed and decided in accordance with the verdict of the *śrutis* alone and not through pure logic and reason.

The cause of controversy.

However, when one tries to find a definite solution to this problem one is confounded with the bewildering mass of antagonistic scriptural- texts propounding at some places the ubiquitous character of the Self or Ātman while in other sections declaring that its dimension is atomic. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* remarks about the Ātman, "That great birthless Self which is identified with the intellect"[1] while the other Upaniṣad observes that it is 'eternal and all-pervasive like ether' pointing to the ubiquitous character of Self. The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, on the other hand, remarks, "This atomic ātman is to be realized through intelligence."[2] These contradictory assessments about the dimension of the Self become a cause for doubt even for those who are firm believers in the testimony of the *śrutis*.

Śaṁkara's view that Ātman is *vibhu*.

Śaṁkara taking his stand on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text quoted above declares that since the individual soul in its transcendental and *pāramārthika* aspect is identical with Brahman its real dimension is *vibhu* (all-pervasive)

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, mantra (IV, 4, 22).
2. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 1, 9).

and not *aṇu* (atomic); all references in the *śrutis* about its atomism really pertain to buddhi through whose superimposition the Ātman acquires an empirical character. As the phenomenal character of jīva is due to the superimposition of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the ideas regarding the measure and the seat of the latter are figuratively [1] used for the jīvātman which, in reality, is all-pervasive. According to him, it is the intellect that is atomic, has its seat in the heart and ultimately on the death of man moves on to different regions and comes back. Thus, all the *śrutis* that refer to the atomic dimension of jīva and its seat in the heart should be understood as of a figurative character.

Vallabha's arguments in favour of jīva's atomic dimension.

Śrī Vallabha, in deference to the Vaiṣṇavite tradition like Rāmānuja and Madhva, was an ardent exponent of jīva's atomic dimension resting on the strength of the arguments advanced in the *Brahmasūtra* treated by the Vaiṣṇavites as the proponent's view (*siddhānta-pakṣa*). For him, it is illogical and irrelevant for the Śaṁkarites to contend that because no other theory of jīva's dimension (i.e., *madhyamaparimāṇa* and *aṇuparimāṇa*) is sustainable, the philosophy of all-pervasiveness of Self is the valid contention because the doctrine of atomic dimension is not only logical and based on experience but is also supported by Vedic testimony. Though the atomic dimension of the individual soul is unambiguously declared in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* and the *Śvetāśvatara*, maintaining that it possesses the dimension of the front part of the rice corn, yet the most forceful argument in support of this standpoint and against the philosophy of its all-pervasiveness is the declaration in the *śrutis* that it, after death, goes upward to celestial regions through the smoky path and returns after the destruction of its *karmas*; this fully justifies its atomic character because no substance that is all-pervasive, such as ether (*ākāśa*), can possess these qualities. Moreover, as argued in the sūtra '*Svātmanācottarayoḥ*' [2] the movement upwards, etc., of the jīva are not through its association with such *upādhis* as the senses and the intellect but by its own self. As there is no limitative adjunct associated with the individual soul in the state of liberation (*mukti*) it is absurd [3]

1. Narain, K.: *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 291.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 3, 20).
3. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 713.

for the Śaṁkarites to imagine that the movement etc. of the jīva are with regard to the intellect. Moreover, this theory could have been relevant [1] only in the context of the validity of the doctrine of the *aupādhika* character of jīva which is unfortunately erroneous and stands, as we shall observe, on a shaky foundation. If the movement, etc., of the soul really pertain to its limitative adjunct, the intellect, then at the time of the movement after death it is the intellect that should move first and then the soul. But the *śruti* mentions otherwise and observes : "After the movement upwards of the jīva, *prāṇa* etc. follow it." [2] The scriptural-texts, according to Vallabhites, are thus clear beyond doubt that when they refer to the soul's upward movement to celestial regions they intend only the jīva's unconditioned nature *per se*. As such movements are inexplicable on the supposition of the soul's ubiquitous character it is expedient and justified that it must be accepted to be atomic. Again, the scriptural text declares that 'the God of Death (Yama) dragged out the thumb shaped individual soul' obviously indicating its helplessness and dependence [3] on the will of the Almighty Controller. Because an all pervasive and omniscient existence can with no stretch of imagination be conceived as being over-lorded and controlled it is necessary that the atomism of soul be recognised as a valid doctrine. It may, however, be argued that if the soul possesses an atomic dimension why does the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text, quoted above, describe it as *mahān* or *vibhu* or ubiquitous like *ākāśa*. Vallabha replies this objection, like Rāmānuja and Madhva, by contending that when in such scriptural texts the seers declare the nature of Ātman as all-pervasive (*vibhu*) they mean by 'Ātman' not the jīva (individual soul) but Brahman. The term '*vijñānamaya*' [4] implies the unlimited abundance of Brahman's knowledge. Such texts, the Vallabhites argue, always refer to the Supreme Ātman and not to jīvātman whose dimension is unequivocally accepted in the *śrutis* as atomic.

The most powerful and important objection against the theory of soul's atomism is the presence of consciousness through-out the whole body when the soul is said to be located only in an insignificant part of the heart. How can the soul, if it is atomic, be the knower of the experiences all over the body? Following the *Brahmasūtra*,

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 111.
2. Tamutkrāntaṁ prāṇo anutkrāmati.
3. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 713.
4. *Ibid*, p. 711.

Vallabha replies this question through the example [1] of the mark of sandalwood. Just as the mark of sandalwood at one point in the forehead keeps the whole body fresh with fragrance the jīvatman also, through its connection with skin, knows and responds to the various stimuli on the whole surface of the body. This position is opposed to the Naiyāyikas and the Advaitins who are the protagonists [2] of jīva's all-pervasiveness on several grounds. Firstly, they contend there is no exact similarity between the jīva and the illustration of sandalwood because whereas the location of the sandalwood-mark at one spot is certified by experience there is no *pramāṇa* to justify the soul's spatial location inside the body. Secondly, if the atomists resort to the following inference for establishing their thesis this inference itself may be found to be vitiated by several fallacies.

The Advaitic and the Naiyāyika objection.

> "The consciousness pervading all over the body is existent at places other than its space of location. Because it possesses the quality of expansion, Like the feeling of coolness all over the body caused by the sandalwood-mark at one place in the body."

This inference according to the protagonists of the all-pervasiveness of Self is illogical for several reasons. Firstly, the reason (*hetu*) in the case, i.e., the 'quality of expansion', conceived to be belonging to consciousness is unfounded. Secondly, there is a clear fallacy of interdependence when the proponents try to justify the quality of the expansion of consciousness after assuming its location at one place and then contending that its existence at one place depends on this expansion. Thirdly, the analogy of sandalwood-mark is irrelevant because, in truth, they are the very subtle parts of sandalwood pervading the body that cause the feeling and experience of coolness. Similar is the case with the analogy of champak-flower, the subtle parts of whose smell, being carried away by air, justify the experience of its fragrance at other places in the wood or the garden. But the consciousness of the jīva has no such parts to pervade over the body. The atomists, however, cite another illustration to prove their point. According to them, just as the light and the lustre of a precious stone

1. Avidrodhaścandanavat. (*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra 2, 3, 23)
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* with *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 104 to 105.

e.g., diamond, spreads out of its location, the consciousness of the soul also expands and pervades over the body even on the supposition of the theory of its atomism and location at one point of space. Yet this analogy from the opponent's standpoint is far-fetched because it misses an important point of difference. The light of a precious-stone — as they conceive — is a separate substance belonging to its own class (*sajātīya*) but consciousness is not a separate substance at all. The opponents, therefore, contend that on the assumption of the atomic character of jīva the fact of the pervasion of consciousness over body is inexplicable. Their chief contention rests on the ground that consciousness is an attribute of the soul whose pervasion over the body is inexplicable on the basis of the different illustrations cited above. Yet it is a fact of experience that a quality (*guṇa*) cannot exist apart from the qualified (*guṇin*); to justify the presence of consciousness over the body the atomists would be ultimately led to the acceptance of the pervasion of soul along with it and would thus contradict their own position. Moreover, because for the philosophers of the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita Schools the very idea of knowledge an an attribute is unjustified, the atomists are trying to defend a beleaguered fortress.

Vallabhite refutation and counter-criticism.

Goswāmī Viṭṭhalanātha, depending on Vallabha's commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, endeavours to refute the opponent's criticism and defend the theory of atomic-dimension. According to him, the opponent's charge that because there is no *pramāṇa* of the jīva's location in body the analogy [1] of sandalwood-mark is invalid is a result of ignorance and misinformation. Such Upaniṣad-texts as 'That Ātman is in the heart', 'Having entered the cave', indicate beyond doubt the location of the individual soul in the heart; as such, the illustration of the sandalwood-mark is quite apt and valid. The opponent's second charge that the proponent's inferential reasoning is vitiated by several fallacies is itself illogical for the argument, as advanced by the atomists, is free from all such defects. There is no validity in the contention that the proposition of jīva's atomic character would render the pervasion of consciousness over the body inexplicable because such a judgement is supported by the analogy of the champak-flower whose fragrance spreads far and wide in the forest. The criticism that because the 'quality' cannot subsist without the 'qualified' the parts of the substance, the champak-flower, should be supposed to be carried away by wind at

1. *Ibid*, p. 106-107.

all such places where the quality of fragrance is available is quite specious and misleading. If the Naiyāyikas can accept the category of 'inherence' without being related to some other entity and if they can acknowledge the existence of quality at the moment of the destruction of a substance why can they not accept the expansion and pervasion of quality at other places? The expansion and pervasion of quality in locations other than those where the 'substance' exists is established on the authority of experience. Even when the merchant keeps *kastūrī*, well wrapped, in the corner of his shop its fragrance pervades throughout the shop. There is, therefore, no fallacy in the argument that even though the atomic soul is located in the heart its quality, the consciousness, pervades the whole body to provide experiences of pleasure and pain. The objection that the example of the precious-stone is irrelevant because here also 'light' is not a quality but a kind of substance belonging to its own class is invalid for if the rays are a kind of substance sprouted outside then when the precious-stone is covered with a cloth they should continue to dazzle, a fact against experience.[1] This, therefore, refutes the opponent's criticism against the validity of the illustration of the precious stone (*maṇi*). The author of the *Brahmasūtra* himself recorded the examples of sandalwood and light to explain the expansion[2] and pervasion of consciousness all over the body. The example of the flower is accepted even by the *śruti* when it observes that 'just as the fragrance of a tree covered with blossoms spreads far and wide, the smell of the meritorious deeds of a man is also sensed at a far off place'.[3]

It may, however, be realized from the above criticism and counter criticism on the problem of the soul's dimension that the real point of controversy between the atomists and the protagonists of its pervasiveness is whether consciousness is a quality or not; the Advaitins and the Sāṁkhya philosophers deny this truth, whereas, the atomists of all schools venture to justify its validity. The Vallabhites, as we have already discussed in our chapter, 'The Theory of Knowledge', maintained that consciousness is both the essence and the quality of soul like 'sun' and 'sunshine'. As such there is no problem with them in seeking a justification for the expansion and pervasion of con-

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 715.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtras (2, 3, 23 to 26).
3. *Mahānārayaṇopaniṣad*, mantra (7, 9).

sciousness over the body on the ground of its being a quality. The *śruti 'prajñayā samāruhya'* [1] explicitly using the word *'prajñā'* or knowledge in an instrumental-case justifies the theory that the consciousness is an attribute of the individual soul. The Vallabhites, therefore, agrue that the doctrine of atomic-dimension is supported by the Upaniṣadic texts and the *Brahmasūtra.*

Another important objection against the philosophy of jiva's atomic dimension as advanced by Śaṁkara in his commentary on the sūtra, 'Tadguṇasāratvāttu tadvyapadeśaḥ prājñavat' [2] is — as based on the proclamation in such Upaniṣadic texts as 'Thou art that' (*tattvamasi*), 'I am Brahman' (*ahaṁbrahmāsmi*) — that the jīva in its transcendental and absolute nature is Brahman Itself. Because Brahman [3] is all-pervasive, (*vibhu*) the jīva in its real and transcendental nature is also ubiquitous. The reference to its atomic dimension in the *śrutis* is only with regard to its empirical status when it is conditioned by intellect. It is only the intellect which is really atomic and not the individual soul; all references in the scriptures about its atomic character are, therefore, figurative.

This argument is refuted vehemently by Vallabha in his commentary on the above aphorism where he argues that the doctrine of pure identity between jīva and Brahman is not the real intention of *'Tat tvaṁ asi'* and other such texts. All-pervasiveness being an uncommon [4] and special attribute of Brahman, like His creatorship (of the world), omniscience, *draṣḍṛtva* (the real seer-hood) etc., can never be attributed to jīva whose difference from Brahman has been well-established by the author of the *Brahmasūtra* at several places on the basis of *aṁśāṁśibhāva.* When the individual soul overbrimmed with the emotion of love and devotion towards Brahman acquires *sarvātma-bhāva,* by His Divine Grace, its own concealed bliss is manifested and it steps in into a state of *Brahmabhāva* (Brahman-hood), a state similar to that of Brahman [5]. In this state it obtains Brahman's special attribute of being the ground of contradictory qualities by [6] which both 'limitation' and 'all-pervasiveness' appear manifested in it just as Lord

1. *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad,* mantras (1, 50 to 53).
2. *Brahmasūtra* (2, 3, 29).
3. Śaṁkara's commentary on above.
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 29).
5. T.D.N., *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa,* p. 111.
6. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya,* p. 731.

Kṛṣṇa, though lying in Yaśodā's lap appeared as the ground and the Immanent Principle of the whole universe. It is the acquisition of this *Brahma-bhāva* which impelled the seers to declare such sentences as '*Thou art that*', '*I am Brahman*' etc. without any conviction on their part about jīva's identity with Brahman. Just as such characteristics as freedom from sin and sorrow, fearlessness, etc. which really pertain to Brahman, as described in the Upaniṣads, and not to Prājña (the seer of the deep-sleep-state) are attributed to Prājña, all-pervasiveness too which is a quality of Brahman is attributed to jīva in his special entranced state of *Brahmabhāva*. Such scriptural texts are a narration not of its essential nature but of an enlightened state (*vidvatdaśā*) when he is looked in embrace [1] with Brahman and, therefore, acquires His qualities. The Śaṁkarite argument is, therefore, redundant and a misrepresentation of the real philosophy of the Upaniṣadic seers. The dimension of the jīva is, therefore, as argued by Vallabha, neither all-pervasive nor of medium dimension but is atomic (*aṇu*). It cannot be of medium-dimension because then it would be difficult to explain the transmigration of the soul from an elephant-body into the body of an ant. The doctrine of all-pervasion is also unsustainable because with this hypothesis such *śrutis* that speak of the dissolution [2] of the jīva would become meaningless. The only doctrine that is supported by reason and the scriptural texts is the philosophy of its atomic dimension.

(D) JĪVA, THE DOER AND ENJOYER

The mundane human belief that the soul is really the agent and enjoyer of the fruits of its actions became a point of interesting debate in the history of Indian philosophy even as early as the sūtra-period with the result that in the *Brahmasūtra* we have a full section viz., *Kartṛadhikaraṇa* devoted to this purpose. Though the realistic philosophy of Nyāya upheld the commonsense standpoint that the soul is both the agent and enjoyer the Sāṁkhya speculation, in its enquiry after the real and the transcendental nature of the soul or *puruṣa*, contended that in its real and transcendental aspect it is pure-consciousness [3] free from all the influences of *Prakṛti*, the Primordial

Sāṁkhya on the nature of Self.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 722.
2. *Prakāśa* on *Śuddhādvaitamārtaṇḍa*, p. 40.
3. *Sāṁkhya-kārikā*, kārikā XI.

Matter. Its phenomenal and empirical character as the agent and enjoyer of action is, therefore, a property not of the true Self but of *buddhi* (intellect) and *ahaṁkāra* (the ego), the evolutes of *Prakṛti*. Śaṁkara who was under the influence of Sāṁkhya metaphysics also foresaw the dangers of commitment to a philosophy that attributed absolute reality and status to the soul's agency and enjoyer-ship in the context of the nature of the Absolute Reality or Brahman as preached by him. In his commentaries on the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra* he, therefore,

Śaṁkara's denial of real agency to soul.

repeatedly asserted that Ātman, from the absolute standpoint, is neither a doer nor an enjoyer. These concepts, according to him, are associated with it on account of the superimposition of the intellect (*buddhi*) to which they really belong. In so far as the Ātman is related to phenomena or is an empirical self the concepts of agency in action and enjoyment have meaning. But, when we consider this problem from the transcendental standpoint, Śaṁkara would disagree to accord any justification to the attribution of such ideas with a principle which, in its nature, is pure, eternal and immutable.

Śaṁkara's arguments.

Śaṁkara, in his commentary on the sūtra, '*Yathā ca takṣobhayathā*',[1] advances several arguments to justify his conviction that the characteristic of agency experienced as being associated with the individual soul is not natural to it like the heat of fire, but is only conditional caused by the association of Nescience and its evolutes. He begins with the presupposition that *kartṛtva* or agency involving activity is by nature productive of pain.[2] The functioning of the moral law determines to each action its effect which, in its turn, produces another activity to maintain the eternal flow of the series of activity-enjoyment-relation or the *saṁsāra*. Thus, if the agency (*kartṛtva*) of the jīva be treated as natural or essential then just as heat is irremovable from fire it would be impossible to divest the jīva of its painful situation. Consequently, all talk about its emancipation would be futile. Since the real nature of a thing is unchangeable, the doctrine of the natural agency would lead to the impossibility of liberation (*anirmokṣa*) and perennial subsistence of bondage. But the scriptural texts which insist upon the

1. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 3, 40).
2. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 292.

identity of jīva and Brahman declare that the individual soul in its transcendental and pure aspect is eternal, pure, conscious [1] and free. This kind of description of Ātman is inconceivable unless the concept of natural agency is denied to it. The alternative left is to acknowledge that the agency of the soul is caused by the superimposition of the attributes of the limitative adjunct, the Nescience and its evolutes. Along with the denunciation of the natural agency the philosophy of natural-enjoyership also stands refuted. Such scriptural texts as, "The infinite entity (*puruṣa*) that is identified with the intellect and is in the midst of the organs, the (self-effulgent) light within the heart (intellect). Assuming the likeness (of the intellect) it moves between the two worlds; its thinks, as it were, it shakes [2] as it were" declare that the concept of enjoyership is relevant only in relation to the jīva which is associated and conditioned by *upādhi*. Not only this, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* there is a clear indication that in the state of self-realization or wisdom there is no 'activity' or 'enjoyment'. The Upaniṣad declares, "Because when there is duality, as it were, the one smells something, one sees something... But when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Self, then what should one smell and through what, what should one see and through what?" [3] Knowing the intention and the real purport of the *śruti* Bādarāyaṇa concluded, so Śaṁkara argues, in the sūtra, '*Yathā ca takṣobhayathā*', that, 'just as a carpenter, in this world, when he takes his axe and other tools in his hand and works feels pain but when he reaches his home and frees himself from these instruments becomes happy, peaceful and free from activity, the Self (*ātman*) associated with duality caused by *avidyā* becomes an agent in its two states, the waking and the dream, and is subjected to sorrow'. [4] The same individual soul after having entered its real Self, the Brahman, in the state of deep-sleep (*samprasāda*) and freed itself from the collocations of intellect, manas, indriyas, etc., is in a state of peace and bliss. In the same way, during the state of emancipation also, the Self having destroyed its *upādhi*, the Nescience, by the fire of wisdom rests in a state of purity, freedom and joy. The sum and substance of this argument is, to Śaṁkara, the validity of the theory that the individual soul, by nature (*svarūpa*) is neither an agent nor

1. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (IV, 3, 7).
3. *Ibid*, mantra (II, 4, 14).
4. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 293.

an enjoyer; these are, however, attributed to it in its empirical or phenomenal state due to the limitation caused by *avidyā*.

Vallabha's refutation of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta.

This explanation of the soul's agency at the hands of the Sāṁkhya and Vedānta philosophers raised a cry of alarm and abhorrence among the protagonists of the Vaiṣṇavite faith for the denial of a real subjectivity in action, whether moral or religious, was sure to destroy the very foundation of *dharma* and *bhakti* as a means to the *summum bonum* of human life whether *apavarga*, salvation or *vaikuṇṭha*. Following the footprints of Rāmānuja, Vallabha attacked the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita Vedānta standpoints as basically at variance with the preachings of the Vedas and the *Brahmasūtras*. It the individual soul is, in reality, not an agent what is the sense in the preachings of the Vedas that enjoin the performance of prescribed action and desistance [1] from the prohibited ones? The *śrutis* explicitly mention performance of different types of sacrifices and *upāsanās* (worships) for the attainment of different results such as *svarga* (heaven). All this can be meaningful only when the agency of the jīva is real and not merely *aupādhika*. A denial of the real agency of the jīvātman would imply the absolute worthlessness and otiose character of all scriptural teachings including the enquiry into the nature of Brahman. Again in the Upaniṣads there are passages — in the Daharavidyā section of the *Chāndogya* — that tell of the soul's enjoyment in the region of the Gandharvas.[2] As enjoyment necessarily implies action and will on the part of the subject, the real agency of the jīva is a requisite presupposition for a genuine faith in such texts. It may, however, be objected that as in any operation of human will, which is a kind of activity of *manas*, it is only the jīva in association with *manas* that is the *kartā* or the agent and not the jīva in its pure status. This objection is, however, irrelevant because the *manas* and the other senses operate only[3] as instruments to be utilised by the individual soul in its activity. It is the soul that is really independent and not such instruments as *manas*, the sense-organs, etc. that work only at its guidance. Therefore, Vallabha concludes that the jīva should be treated as the real agent.

The Advaitins, however, argue that all these difficulties can be resolved on the assumption that it is the jīva, as conditioned by *avidyā*

1. Kartā śāstrārthavattvāt. (*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra 2, 3, 33).
2. Vihāropadeśāt, (*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra 2, 3, 34).
3. Upādānāt. (*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra 2, 3, 35).

or *buddhi* in its phenomenal state, that is really the agent and not the soul in its real, pure and transcendental state. Against this Vallabha retorts : What do they mean when they assert that the jīva in relation to *buddhi* is the agent? Do they mean that 'agency' is the nature of the 'intellect' and it enters into the individual soul? Or, do they intend that agency (*kartṛtva*) which really belongs to jīva like the fluidity of *ghṛta* (butter), gets manifested by its relation to the intellect (*buddhi*)? Or, again do they mean that *kartṛtva* which is as unreal and illusory as a hare's horn is revealed subsequent to the jīva's relation with *buddhi*? The first of these alternatives is, Vallabha argues, inadmissible because intellect which by nature is insentient, is manifestly devoid of activity which is necessarily conscious. No one has ever observed a soul activated by the force of conscious activity belonging to Matter. The second alternative, in so far as it maintains that the agency of action really belongs to jīva is an acceptance of the Vallabhite position. The third alternative implying the falsity of agency would be a contradiction of the dictates of scriptures, an assumption of *asatkāryavāda* and virtual acceptance of the Mādhyamika Śūnyavāda. As the doctrines of *Śūnyavāda* and *Asatkāryavāda* are discarded by all the schools of Uttara Mīmāṁsā, Vallabha contends that the assumption of the unreality of agency is illogical and untenable. Moreover, as we have discussed in an earlier chapter of this book, the scriptural texts, according to Vallabhites, establish that Brahman in Its transcendental and *nirguṇa* state is also an agent performing varieties of actions. Any theory of the unreality of action and agency would thus be violation of this specific scriptural injunction.

The Śaṁkarite objection that because activity by its very nature is painful any attribution of agency to the real nature of jīva would imply its eternal bondage rests on a serious misconception that every kind of activity is painful; this is against both experience and testimony. In our daily lives we come across various activities that are productive of pleasure for example 'drinking milk'. In the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* we have a description of sage Sanatkumar,[1] a liberated soul, preaching the doctrine of *Bhūmā* to Nārada for the enlightenment of humanity at large. If *kartṛtva* were really painful why should have he chosen to be an agent of philosophical instruction? Thus, both experience and scriptures decry the Śaṁkarite belief that every activity is painful.

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 736.

It would, however, be improper to argue that the *Gītā* also suggests the doctrine of the inactivity of Self when it observes, "He who sees that actions are in every way performed only by *Prakṛti* and likewise sees the Self as the non-doer alone sees the truth",[1] for what the *Gītā* intends to instruct in such couplets is the truth that all worldly actions are caused by *Prakṛti* and not those of either Brahman or the liberated souls. The *Gītā* itself enumerates agency as one of the five causes for accomplishment of all work when it remarks, "The seat of action and likewise the agent, the various senses, the different and manifold effects, the presiding divinity being the fifth of these (causes)."[2] Vallabha, therefore, concludes that the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita philosophers are treading a wrong path in their denouncement of real activity and agency of jīva. The *kartṛtva* of jīva [3] is real and natural, not *aupādhika*, and is one of its attributes.

From the Śaṁkarite position, as narrated above, it may be observed that the real point of divergence on this question between the Advaitins and the Vaiṣṇavites, including Vallabha, is the question whether the Advaitin's philosophy of the individual soul as conditioned by nescience (*avidyā*) is valid or not and whether their doctrine of the identity or non-duality between jīva and Brahman is true and above suspicion on the testimony of the scriptures. As the first problem involves discussion on the nature of *avidyā* and its relation to individual soul, we propose to discuss it, in detail, in another section of this chapter.

The opponents of the philosophy of soul's real activity and agency point out another objection against such a contention. If the jīva's agency is natural and unbounded, how is it that it acts against its own well-being and interest? Vallabha replies this by contending that though the individual soul is independent in the choice and performance of its activities, the loss of its [4] powers of action and knowledge at the time of its emanation from Brahman is responsible for its incapacity; these can, however, be reclaimed through the process of Yoga [5] or deep-concentration (*samādhi*) on proper lines.

1. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XIII, 29).
2. *Ibid*, śloka (XVIII, 14).
3. Tasmāt jīvasya svābhāvikaṁ kartṛtvaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 745).
4. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra, (2, 3, 39).
5. Jīvasya kriyājñānaśaktī yogena siddhyataḥ. Samādhyabhāvāt śaktyabhāvaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 39).

The doctrine of the loss or concealment of the six primal powers of the soul brings to light its dependence on the Will of Brahman establishing the truth that the jīva's activity, though apparently independent, is ultimately governed and controlled by the Lord's Wish. As the *śruti* contends, "Whomsoever He desires to uplift He propels him to act piously." Bādarāyaṇa — so all his commentators — was prone to the belief that absolute freedom of will is denied to the soul in the ultimate structure of things because the numerous conditions limiting and influencing the choice of human actions are under the control of the Omniscient and Omnipotent God and not within the command of the individual soul. In face of such a situation, in order to save the Almighty from the charge of partiality and cruelty, some of the commentators upheld that God's instrumentality in the determination of human action is itself determined by the soul's own good and evil deeds so that when He motivates him to a particular action He is behaving not as a despot but as a dispenser. Vallabha and his son Viṭṭhalanātha were quite indisposed to subject God's Free Will and His writ to limitation of any kind. They, therefore, contended that though Brahman generally induces the human souls to actions in accordance with their own *karmas* in order to maintain His own universal moral law or *maryādā* which He Himself has established yet no one can prevent Him from showering His Grace on a soul [1] when He so pleases. As the jīva is an *aṁśa* of Brahman in the sense of *tādātmya* or identity, the *kartṛtva* which really is an attribute of Brahman is passed on to the jīva.

It may, however, be questioned : If Brahman is really the 'agent' then how can any agency and realization of its fruit be associated with the jīva? Vallabha replies this point by suggesting that the indeterminism and free-will of the soul is conceivable and legitimate only in its choice of action against the background of the conditions created by God [2] beyond which he has absolutely no control. The distribution of fruits and results is totally a function of God. Just as a father is not responsible for the actions of his son, God is also not responsible for the deeds and misdeeds of the individual soul even though the real activity and motivation belongs to Him. We will, however, discuss this problem, at length, in another chapter of this book.

1. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 43), p. 751.
2. Prayatna paryantaṁ jīvakṛtaṁ. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 42).

Vallabha-both bond-age and false knowledge are real.

Before ending this description of the nature of individual soul it is necessary to refer to two important attributes, viz., 'bondage' and 'false-knowledge' which are always found to be associated with it in its phenomenal existence. What is the nature of these two attributes and how the jīvātman happens to acquire them? Śaṁkara, as we know, was disinclined to recognise the reality of both bondage and false-knowledge on the ground that any such assumption would imply the soul's permanent subjection to bondage and ignorance for what is real is always unchangeable and irremovable. He, therefore, argued that both bondage and false-knowledge of the jīva are unreal and caused by the superimposition of beginningless and inexplicable Nescience. Vallabha, however, opposed this philosophy and contended that both 'bondage' and 'false-knowledge' (*viparyaya*) of the jīva are absolutely [1] real like other creations of God.

Cause of bondage and false-knowledge.

The bondage of the jīva is a result of the loss of its six powers due to the concealment of the six divine qualities (*aiśvarya*) at the time when he acquired jīva-hood (*jīvabhāva*) consequent upon the concealment of Bliss. As these pristine divine glories and its blissful character lie concealed within it, they can be manifested again in the individual soul at His Divine Grace when Brahman is merciful enough to grant him *Brahmabhāva* or *Sarvātmabhāva*. Bondage and release are not false-superimpositions but real acts of God. We shall, however, elaborate these points in another chapter. False-knowledge or *viparyaya* is also caused by the obscuration of the jīva's six powers and its subsequent association with *avidyā* (nescience), a power created by God's *māyā*. According to Puruṣottama, the manifestation of even one of the six *aiśvarya* causes [2] the jīva's salvation. On the other hand, the concealment of even one of them is responsible for its bondage and deception (*viparyaya*).

(E) KINDS OF JĪVAS

Vallabhite philosophy recognises three stages of the individual souls, viz., *śuddha*, *saṁsārī* and *mukta* and describes them as follows :

(1) *Śuddha (Pure Souls)* : When the souls emanate from [3] Akṣara-

1. Parābhidhyānāntu tirohitaṁ tato hyasya bandhaviparyayau.
(*Brahmasūtra*, sūtra 3, 2, 5 with *Aṇubhāṣya*).
2. *Prakāśa* on sūtra (3, 2, 5).
3. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 28.

Śuddha

the Immutable aspect of Brahman, effulgent and pervaded with pure-sattva (which is uncontaminated with either *rajas* or *tamas*) — they get associated with parts of this *sattva*. Subsequently, by the Divine Will this part of pure *sattva* predominates and there is the concealment of the soul's intrinsic [1] bliss. In this stage, however, there is neither any obscuration of the six powers (*aiśvaryas*) nor any association with *avidyā*. This stage of the jīva is called the *śuddha*-state because it is not [2] yet contaminated by nescience.

(2) Saṁsārī (Transmigratory Souls) : Due to God's Wish, when the six powers (*aiśvaryas*) of the jīva are concealed, it is associated with *avidyā* and caught in the rut of the transmigratory world-order. In this state the individual souls under the influence of nescience undergo birth and rebirth and acquire innumerable gross and subtle bodies till under the influence of *vidyā* and through Lord's devotion they are emancipated from the shackles of bondage. Such individual souls are called *saṁsārī* jīvas or transmigratory souls.

Saṁsārī

Among such souls there are some who, due to Lord's Wish, have a natural tendency towards righteousness and are consequently prone to the attainment of liberation (*daivīsampad*); others who are bereft of this divine quality possess devilish inclination for a total subjection to world's transmigratory order. The chain of recurrent transmigration of both these kinds of jīvas is said to be beginningless (*anādi*) but this beginninglessness is only relative and not absolute.

(3) *Mukta (Liberated Souls)* : When the individual soul, after under-going all kinds of sorrows and sufferings during its transmigratory existence, seeks shelter in the lotus-feet of the Lord and obtains His Divine Grace it is emancipated from the clutches of Māyā. It then rests in its own intrinsic nature and obtains any of the four kinds of *muktis*. In this state the jīvas are called the *mukta-jīvas* or the liberated souls.

Mukta-jīvas.

Out of these liberated souls, some of them acquire emancipation even during the course of their earthly existence possessing human

1. Ānandāṁśasya pūrvameva tirohito yena jīvabhāvaḥ.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 3, 2, 5 - as interpreted in *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 28).
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 30.

bodies, whereas, there are others who get salvation only after death. The former class of the *mukta-jīvas* is called *jīvanmukta* whereas the latter is termed only '*mukta*' (similar to the *videha-mukta* state of Advaita Vedānta).

The *saṁsārī-jīvas* (transmigratory souls) are of two kinds, viz., *Daivī-jīvas* and *Āsura-jīvas*. The *Daivī-jīvas* or the divine souls are those that have the inherent capacity for obtaining salvation. As such, they possess some or all of the divine attributes described in the *Gītā*[1] that are supposed to lead to liberation. On the other hand, the *Āsura-jīvas* (demoniac-souls) who have only worldly enjoyment as their ultimate ideal of existence always try for all sorts of mundane pleasures. They are, therefore, endowed with all such demoniac qualities that the *Gītā* mentions[2] about them.

Daivī-jīvas of two kinds-*maryādā* and *puṣṭi*-jīvas

Likewise the *Daivī-jīvas* are again classified into two, viz., the *Maryādā-jīvas* and the *Puṣṭi-jīvas*. The Vallabhites describe their characteristics as follows :

(a) *Maryādā-jīvas* : Such souls have an inborn faith in Vedic injunctions. They believe that performance of action and attainment of knowledge in accordance with Vedic teachings is the real way to salvation. By nature they have greater faith in Vedic injunctions and prohibitions than the efficacy of God's Grace and Mercy in the attainment of freedom from bondage.

(b) *Puṣṭi-jīvas* : These souls believe that God's Grace and Mercy alone are the instruments for the attainment of the *summum bonum* of human existence. To them the ultimate ideal of human life is not salvation (*mokṣa*) but devotion or service with love to God. Such souls are the choicest selection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vallabha, therefore, observes that the *Puṣṭi-jīvas* are created by God from His[3] very Body whereas the *Maryādā* and the *Pravāha* jīvas are produced from His Speech and Desire respectively.

The *Puṣṭi-jīvas* are again of two kinds, viz., the *Śuddha-puṣṭi-jīvas* and *Miśra-puṣṭi-jīvas*. They possess the following qualities :

1. *Bhagavadgīta*, Chapter XVI, ślokas 1 to 5.
2. *Ibid*, ślokas (XVI, 6 to 19)
3. *Puṣṭipravāhamaryādābheda*, śloka 9.

Śuddha-puṣṭi, Miśra-puṣṭi and Puṣṭi-puṣṭi jivas.

(1) *Śuddha-puṣṭi-jīvas* : These souls are free from [1] the clutches of God's *māyā* due to which their six divine powers are not destroyed. They exist in Lord Kṛṣṇa's Goloka to take part in His Divine Sport and serve Him with love. Ultimately they acquire the Lord's divine nature, the *saccidānanda* and subsist in Him. Such souls are regarded as supreme in Śrī Vallabha's philosophy.

(2) *Miśra-puṣṭi-jīvas* : These souls, on account of their past demerits, have to take birth in this world. Because they follow the *maryādā* and the *pravāha* paths also along with the *Puṣṭi* way of life they are known as *Miśra-puṣṭi* souls. Due to their native inclination towards *puṣṭi* they are not attached to worldly objects. These mixed-puṣṭi-souls are again of the following three kinds :

(i) *Puṣṭi-puṣṭi-jīvas* : They are omniscient and possess knowledge of God's nature and his attributes.

(ii) *Maryādāpuṣṭi-jivas* : These souls [2] are always engaged in singing about the glories of God. They have full knowledge of His Divine attributes.

(iii) *Pravāha-puṣṭi-jīvas* : These souls are engaged in performing good deeds. Generally they are devoid of love towards God, yet they are engaged in service and devotion to Him with the intention of obtaining certain worldly results and satisfaction.

Maryādā souls.

The pure *maryādā*-souls follow only the path of knowledge as described in the Vedas. Such souls are engaged in the realization of Brahman-consciousness alone and ultimately with the performance of Vedic rituals and acquisition of knowledge on Vedic lines acquire salvation which is only a state of immutable rest in the Akṣara aspect of Brahman. These souls are characteristically devoid of all emotions of devotion and service with love towards God as preached in the *Puṣṭimārga*.

Prāvaha-jīvas.

The *Pravāha-jīvas* are neither interested in devotion or *bhakti* towards God nor in following the Vedic path. They are totally lost in the darkness of this world to become the permanent creatures of its transmigratory order. These souls are born out of the Lord's Wish or Manas and are always in

1. Sukhwal : *The Philosophy of Vallabha* (Hindi), p. 120.
2. *Puṣṭipravāhamaryādābheda*, ślokas 14 to 16.

the clutches of *māyā* and possess most of the demoniac qualities enumerated in the *Bhagavadgītā*. They are generally without any ethical sense of the good and the evil; they are impure and unrighteous in their conduct. Such *pravāha-souls* are of two kinds, viz., *Ajña* and *Durjña*. The *Ajña* souls are ignorant; they blindly follow the demoniac souls in their conduct. The *Durjña* souls are the worst of the lot. They, by nature [1], possess all the demoniac attributes so that their activities are always materialistic, hedonistic, irreligious and leading towards Hell. Vallabha prohibits all the followers of the *Puṣṭimārga* to shun their company.

(F) DOCTRINE OF *AVIDYĀ* AND *VIDYĀ*

Nature of *Avidyā*.

As already observed in the preceding sections, Vallabhism recognises the instrumentality of *avidyā* (nescience) in affecting the soul's bondage and its inalienable relation with world's transmigratory order. What then is this *avidyā*? What is its nature and how does it function in the accomplishment of soul's bondage? In Indian philosophy the problem of the nature of *avidyā* or *ajñāna* is usually solved by regarding it either as negative, in the sense of the denial of knowledge, or positive or *anirvacanīya*, i.e., different from both real and unreal. Those systems that emphasize the positiveness (*bhāvātmaktā*) of *avidyā* are generally convinced of its status as a real principle with probably the sole exception of Advaita Vedānta where *avidyā* is contemplated as both positive and *anirvacanīya* (inexplicable) or as different from both real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*). In Advaita Vedānta, however, the term 'positive' (*bhāva*) is used in the sense of the denial of unreality. To them, *avidyā* is positive simply because its effects, the illusions, possess the capability of producing effect (*arthakriyākāritva*). Among those who imagined it to be a positive and real principle, two schools of thinkers are unambiguously manifest; firstly, those who regard it to be a power of God and, secondly, those to whom it is a form or an evolute of *Prakṛti* or the *acit* principle like Rāmānuja,[2] to whom the terms '*avidyā*', '*māyā*' and '*prakṛti*' are synonymous, and Nimbārka who identified *avidyā* with the past [3] deeds (*karmas*) of the soul.

1. *Puṣṭipravāhamaryādābheda*, ślokas 24 to 25.
2. *Tattvatraya*, p. 38.
3. Mishra, Umesha. : *The Nimbārka School of Vedānta*, p. 42.

Avidyā, real, positive and a power of God.

Vallabha, on the authority of the Upaniṣads and the *Bhāgavata*, was convinced that *avidyā* which has its seat (*āśraya*) in the individual soul and not in Brahman, as misunderstood in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, is a real and a positive priniciple in the sense of being a power of God which is associated with the soul for rendering it oblivious both of its true nature and that of God. Both *avidyā* and its opposite, the *vidyā* or knowledge, are the two powers caused by Brahman's *māyā* or His potentiality to be anything and everything at the same time. Though in pursuance of *Śrībhāgavata's* enumeration [1] of *avidyā* and *māyā* as separate powers in the list of the twelve powers of God, the difference of *avidyā*, as causing the jiva's *saṁsāra*, and *māyā*, as creating the *prapañca* or the real-world is indubitable yet because *avidyā* and *māyā* in these two specific senses are themselves an offshoot of Brahman's supra-rational potentiality by which He becomes all and each at the same time and is the repository of contradictory attributes — which is nomenclatured '*Māyā*' in Vallabhite literature — it is logical and valid to regard *avidyā* as produced by Lord's *Māyā*. Vallabha, therefore, unambiguously declares that the individual soul's nescience or ignorance is neither its limitative adjunct in the sense of creating its soul-hood nor its own product but a power of God caused by His inscrutable and supra-rational power, the *Māyā*. *Avidyā* which thus is real and positive is a principle which is responsible for the jīva's *saṁsāra* or its false sense of 'ego', the 'I' and the 'mine' lying at the back of the whole perversion and misrepresentation of the world-order or *prapañca* as a phenomenal appearance of name and form and not as Brahman which it really is.

Both *avidyā* and *vidyā* caused by God.

Avidyā- the cause of 'ego'.

As we shall discuss, in detail, Vallabha created a distinction between *saṁsāra* and *prapañca* not only to establish the absolute reality of the latter but also to convince that whenever the scriptures preach the removal and destructibility of world by knowledge (*jñāna*) they have always the *saṁsāra* in mind. It is *saṁsāra* which has *avidyā* for its instrumental cause, removable at the rise of Brahma-knowledge, and not the *prapañca*. Thus *avidyā* with all its effects is subject to

Distinction between *saṁsāra* and *prapañca*.

1. *Bhāgavata*, ślokas (X, 39, 55).

sublation by knowledge or *vidyā* which is just another power of God. Though Vallabhism recognises the truth of the contention that ignorance is sublatable by knowledge yet it does not assign 'knowledge' a supremacy to be an ultimate instrument of the acquisition of the *summum bonum* of life because knowledge or *vidyā* is itself subject to removal at the hands of God through His Divine Mercy. Both nescience and science (*vidyā*), the two powers [1], can be withdrawn at His sweet will when the Lord so wishes. To Vallabha and his followers, the ultimate principle of the destruction of *avidyā* and *saṁsāra* is not *vidyā* but God's Divine Mercy which can be invoked through devotion and living a life governed by knowledge.

The functions of *Avidyā* and *Vidyā*.

The function of *avidyā*, according to Vallabha, is to effect in the individual soul ignorance as well as false knowledge about its own real nature and the real nature of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman. Its seat or locus is, therefore, the individual soul and not Brahman as contemplated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. As a matter of fact, the jīva is the locus of both *vidyā* (knowledge) and *avidyā* (nescience), In the words of Śrī Vallabha, "*Vidyā* and *Avidyā* are the two powers of God controlled by *Māyā*. Both of them belong to jīva and none-else; it is *avidyā* that causes its sorows and lack of lordship." [2] Thus, it is nescience which by creating in the individual soul a sense of identity with the body, the senses, the vital-breath and *antaḥkaraṇa* (internal-organ) with its consequent sense of 'ego' that effects its bondage. *Vidyā* or knowledge, on the other hand, is the instrument of its salvation (*mokṣa*). The function of knowledge or *vidyā*, therefore, is to predominate over, conceal and dissolve the effects of nescience and thus lead to the liberation of the human soul.

Five knots of Avidyā.

According to Vallabha, both *Avidyā* and *Vidyā* have five knots (*parva*) each; they are, so to say, the five conditional stages of their operations. The five knots or *parvas* [3] of *avidyā* are the superimposition in the Self of (1) the body, (2) the senses, (3) the vital- breath, (4) the *antaḥkaraṇa* and (5) the ignorance about its own real nature (*svarūpājñāna*). Due

1. Bhaktau satyāṁ avidyādi nivartate vidyāpi, Anyathā nityamuktatā na syāt. (*Prakāśa* on *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 31).
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid*, kārikā 32 with *Prakāśa*, p. 105

to the influence of *avidyā*, the jīva acquires, gradually, the ideas that its own self is the body, the senses, the vital-breath (*prāṇa*) and the internal-organ and possesses their attributes. Due to this false identification the soul forgets its true nature that it is a part (*aṁśa*) of Saccidānanda Brahman; so it is caught in the snare of the bondage of *saṁsāra* to suffer under the harrow of its sorrows and sufferings.

Five knots of *Vidyā*.

The five knots of *vidyā* (wisdom), whose rise sublates the effects of ignorance are enumerated by [1] Vallabha as (1) *Vairāgya* or a feeling of disgust towards worldly objects, (2) *Sāṁkhya*- total renunciation with a sense of discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal. (3) *Yoga*- the performance of the eight-fold path of yogic practices, (4) *Tapas*- philosophical assessment of the truth or the state of deep and one-pointed concentration and (5) Supreme Love- a state of unbroken and continuous emotion of love and service towards the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These are the five knots or the means (*sādhana*) by the performance of which the wise soul obtains God-realization and emancipation from bondage. It may, however, be observed here that as per the interpretation of the various Vallabhite commentators the Supreme Love mentioned as the fifth knot — which is only a means and not an end — should be treated as *maryādika* [2] or *sopādhika* form of devotion and not the *puṣṭibhakti* or *nirupādhika* devotion which is both the means and the end in the Śuddhādvaita system. Thus, according to Vallabha, when the individual soul after undergoing the strict performance of all these stages of wisdom renders the five-knots of *avidyā* ineffective it obtains fitness for liberation as well as devotional and loving service to God and accompaniment in His Divine, Celestial and Eternal Sport.

Vidyā removes only *saṁsāra* and not the world-order.

Here it is important to remember that the abnegation of the various superimpositions caused by *avidyā* by the performance of the different means of Wisdom (*vidyā*) does not imply their total destruction as conceived in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. Because *Māyā*, which is the mother of both *avidyā* and *vidyā*, is not destroyed by mere pure *sāttvika* knowledge it would

1. *Ibid*, kārikās 45 to 46 with *Prakāśa*.
2. *Yojanā*, p. 87. and Mishra, K.N. : *Snehapūrṇī* commentary (Hindi), p. 146.

be specious to imagine that knowledge can bring forth the total annihilation of the world-order (*viśvamāyānivṛtti*). Thus *vidyā* or knowledge can be instrumental only in the release or freedom from birth and rebirth but not in the total removal of the world-order. Thus the Vallabhites emphasise only the possibility of the removal of *saṁsāra* through *vidyā* and not the annihilation of the world-order or *prapañca*. This is the reason why in the *jīvanmukti* state though the superimpositions of body etc. are removed there is no physical destruction of the body of the wise seer. Moreover, as the Vallabhites explain, though all the three former superimpositions are sublatable [1] by *vidyā*, the superimposition of *antaḥkaraṇa* is not completely destroyed keeping the possibility of its rise again.

(G) THE THEORY OF *SAṀSĀRA*

The doctrine of *saṁsāra* as different from *prapañca* or the cosmic-universe is a special feature of Śrī Vallabha's philosophy, a distinction which is generally discarded by the other systems of Indian thought. Under the compulsion of attributing absolute reality to the world-order and the dictates of such scriptural-texts that speak of the illusory character (*māyāmātratva*) of cosmos and its sublation by knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman Śrī Vallabha was constrained to invent this novel theory as a *via-media* between the two conflicting opinions, a doctrine in which the objective universe is distinguished from its subjective apprehension. Our discussion of the Vallabhite distinction between the 'object' and 'objectivity' in the chapter, 'The Theory of Knowledge', is explicative of the reasons and the concern that governed the epistemological distinction by which the status of the 'subjective apprehension' called *saṁsāra* is distinguished from the status and reality of the 'objective universe' or the *prapañca*.

The nature of *Saṁsāra*.

In his *Tattvadīpanibandha*, Vallabha observes, "The cosmic universe (*prapañca*) being an effect of Brahman is of Its very nature and is caused by Māyā. The talk of the jīva's egoistic *saṁsāra* is on account of *avidyā* of Its (Brahman's) power. The dissolution of *saṁsāra* occurs at the time of liberation but there is no dissolution of the cosmic-universe. This

1. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 108.

universe is, however, dissolved — which is blissful to all the jīvas — when Lord Kṛṣṇa (the Brahman) desires to play in Himself (*ātmaramaṇa*)."[1] These *kārikās* specifically mention that Vallabha distinguished the concept of *saṁsāra* from that of *prapañca* on three counts, viz., (1) in respect of their meaning and nature, (2) in respect of their causes and (3) with regard to their dissolution.

By the cosmic universe or *prapañca* the Vallabhites mean the external objective universe of Matter with all its name, form and activity including the phenomenon of duality. On the other hand, by *saṁsāra* they imply the whole span of subjective mental apprehensions, cognitive, effective and conative, that are associated with the feeling of 'ego' or the sense of the 'mine' and 'thine'. Specifically, it is the association of the 'I' or the 'ego' that constitutes the real nature of the *saṁsāra* and differentiates it from *prapañca*. The cosmic universe with all its names and forms is a manifestation of Brahman and as such, being an aspect of Brahman, is as real as the Ultimate Reality itself. To Vallabha, *prapañca* is Brahman itself, Its *ādhibhautika* aspect just as the coiled-pose of the serpent is serpent only. Even though all duality and difference is a desired aspect of Brahman, the individual soul's idea of the various cognitive objects as different from each other and subsisting in themselves in isolation from Brahman is a part of *saṁsāra*. The Vallabhites, therefore, declare that though duality and difference are a part of *prapañca* and, therefore, real, the jīva's knowledge of this duality belongs to *saṁsāra* and is consequently false and unreal. All knowledge of origination,[2] destruction, perversity, duality, etc. pertaining to the external world, in so far as it involves the idea of the 'I' and 'mine', is a matter of *saṁsāra* and not of *prapañca*. The *Bhāgavata* specifically mentions that the idea of the duality between the 'I' and 'You', 'mine and thine' is the constitutive condition of '*saṁsāra*' and, therefore, of 'fear'.

The causes of *saṁ-sāra* and *prapañca*.

Not only are the essential natures of the *saṁsāra* and the *prapañca* different, their material and instrumental causes are also different. *Prapañca*, the external cosmic universe, which is an evolute of Brahman has Brahman for its material-cause and *māyā* as the instrumental

1. *T.D.N. Śāstrārathaprakaraṇa*, kārikās 23 & 24.
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Chapter on Prapañcaviveka, p. 19.

cause of its manifestation. The *saṁsāra*, on the other hand, being illusory and absolutely false has no material-cause. However, it is caused by *avidyā*, a power of Brahman, which serves only as its instrumental-cause. Thus, because Brahman is the inherent-cause and the ultimate Ground of the universe it is as real as Brahman Itself. The *saṁsāra*, on the other hand, which is without any material-cause is *māyika*, illusory and unreal. Because the *saṁsāra* is caused by *avidyā* and is unreal, it is sublatable by knowledge (*jñāna*) at the time of Brahman-realization.

The *śrutis* refer only to the sublation of *saṁsāra*.

Whenever the *śrutis* refer to the sublation of the 'world-order' by *jñāna* they refer only to *saṁsāra* and not to *prapañca*. The Advaitins who consider the fact of being sublated by knowledge (*jñānanivartyatva*) as one of the reasons for the falsity of world gravely misunderstand the śruti-texts when they apply them to *prapañca*. To Vallabha, they all refer to *saṁsāra* and surely the fact of being sublatable by knowledge proves the falsity of *saṁsāra*.

Difference in the natures of dissolutions of *saṁsara* and *prapañca*.

The *prapañca* is different from *saṁsāra* also on the ground that the nature of its dissolution is different from that of the dissolution of *saṁsāra*. Whereas the *saṁsāra* with all its sense of duality, etc., is dissolved when the wise-soul attains salvation (*mukti*), the *prapañca* continues to exist. It is because of this indubitable fact that the *jīvanmukta*, whose *saṁsāra* is no doubt destroyed, continues to exist in his physical frame. The *prapañca*, according to Vallabhites, is dissolved only when the Lord wishes to terminate His external play and thus effects a concealment of His cosmic manifestation. In such a state, all individual souls under His Divine Mercy enjoy the bliss of *Saccidānanda*. Thus this philosophy of *saṁsāra*, as different from *prapañca*, saves the Śuddhādvaita system of philosophy from many a knotty problems that a protagonist of a real, external world has very often to confront.

(H) THE NATURE OF THE EGO

Difference between the Vallabhite and the Śaṁkarite theories of 'Ego'.

The above Vallabhite exposition of the 'ego' as unreal, illusory, caused by Brahman's power named *avidyā*, serving as the real villain in the whole drama of the soul's transmigratory existence, may seem to bear close resemblance with the Śaṁkarite explanation of this concept where the real or the transcendental

nature of the Self is considered to be free from the consciousness of the 'I' which, as they explained, is *cidacidātmaka* and is a result of the mutual superimposition of the Self and the not-Self or the super-imposition and reflection of consciousness in *antaḥkaraṇa* leading to the conviction that the individual soul in its ultimate status is free from the notion of the 'I'.

We would, however, be stretching our imagination too far if we come to such a point of belief that Vallabha was a protagonist of the total annihilation of the notion of 'I' or the sense of identity of the individual soul. Like other Vaiṣṇavites, Vallabha maintained that the jīva always sustains its identity. Since the moment of its separation or *vyuccaraṇa* from the Akṣara Brahman, the individual soul, in association with the pure-sattva aspect and as a result of the concealment of the aspect of bliss, never sheds off the notion of identity [1] which, however, becomes always a part and parcel of its essential nature. The 'ego' which the Vallabhites so vehemently denounce is not this idea of individuality or identity which is present in the jīva even in its pure state (*śuddha-jīva*) but the perversion of this sense of individuality in association with defects caused by *avidyā*. Since *avidyā* is the power of God, it creates and intensifies this egoistic perversion in all such individual souls whom God wills to subjugate to the order of transmigration. Consequently, only those unfortunate souls who are caught in the mesh of ignorance are really the seats of this diabolical ego. However, those souls that are eternally free (*nitya-mukta*) from the influence of *avidyā* are bereft of the sense of 'ego', in its perverted form, and are yet conscious of their individuality so that they can engage themselves in service, with love, to God and take part in His Eternal Sport. Thus Vallabhism, while upholding the presence of individuality in the individual soul, seeks to disparage and denounce the perverted sense of the 'ego', the 'I' and 'the mine'. What causes the real mischief is the transmigratory soul's conviction in the form, 'I am the doer of this action', 'The result originating from this work is mine', 'I am the enjoyer of the fruit of this action'. Because in these convictions the individual self imagines itself, its actions and the fruits as different from Brahman, all of them are wrong and illusory leading to darkness and bondage. Such a philosophy sustained to uphold the Vaiṣṇavite belief in the *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* of the individual soul

1. Abhimānaśca ānandāṁśasya tirohitatvāt. (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 754).

and the persistence of its individuality during the state of not only liberation but in the higher celestial state of pure-devotional-consciousness to God as well.

(1) REFUTATION OF THE IDENTITY OF JĪVA AND BRAHMAN

Like all other Vaiṣṇavite philosophers, Vallabha was vehemently opposed to the Śaṁkarite thesis of the *pāramārthika* identity of the individual soul and Brahman and the doctrine that the jīvātman is a phenomenal appearance caused by the limitation of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman by the positive, inexplicable and beginningless principle of Nescience (*avidyā*). The refutation of this Advaitic position, in the works of Śrī Vallabha and his eminent followers, first endeavours to attack the very definition and the concept of *avidyā* and its relation to Brahman and then undertakes a criticism of the *modus operandi* of the mututal superimposition of Brahman and *ajñāna* as contemplated in the Śaṁkarite system of philosophy.

Śaṁkara's contention in the sūtra, '*Ābhāsa eva ca*',[1] that the jīva is only an appearance — like the image of the sun's disc reflected in water — caused by *avidyā* is criticised by Viṭṭhalanātha in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*[2], He poses the question : Whose appearance is this *ābhāsa* or appearance? Is it of Brahman or that of the jīva? It cannot pertain to the jīva because it is itself the appearance; the only alternative left is to recognise that the appearance belogs to Brahman. But such a position is unwarranted for it would imply the presence of delusion in Brahman Itself which is omniscient and self-evident effulgence of consciousness. In truth, the real question is : What is really the nature of the Śaṁkarite *avidyā* and how is it related to Brahman? The Śaṁkarite definition of *ajñāna* or *māyā* as a beginningless, positive (*bhāvarūpa*) and inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) principle determining or limiting the real nature of Brahman and thus affecting the illusory appearance of the individual soul and the cosmic-universe (*jagat*) is quite indefensible because none of its three characteristics, viz., beginninglessness (*anāditva*), positiveness (*bhāvarūpatva*) and inexplicability (*anirvacanīyatā*) are, according to Vallabhites, sustainable.

Viṭṭhalanath's criticism of the advaita position.

Refutation of the nature of Avidyā as explained by Śaṁkara.

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on sūtra (2, 3, 50).
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 34.

If *avidyā* is a beginningless principle limiting Brahman which too is beginningless [1] then there is absolutely no possibility either of the soul's liberation from *avidyā* or the destruction of the illusory *prapañca* because what is beginningless is also end-less and eternal. Such a situation would imply that the scriptural teachings for self-realization and attainment of salvation are redundant and meaningless. Moreover, the consideration of *avidyā* as *anādi* would imply its existence as a principle other than Brahman since eternity and thus violate the Upaniṣad-text dictating that there was only one 'Truth in the beginning'. The Advaitin's explanation of the nature of *avidyā* as inexplicable or as different from both real (*sat*) and unreal (*asat*) and their interpretation that 'positiveness' only means 'difference from unreality' is illogical for it is a crude violation of the Law of the Excluded Middle. To the Vallabhites, it is almost preposterous [2] to think that a principle whose effect determines the appearance of the whole world, including all practical activities (*vyavahāra*), is inexplicable; to say that it is beyond expression is only a language of deceit. If it is *anirvacanīya* how can an Advaitic philosopher teach and explain it to his students? Moreover, to argue that a principle which is different from real (*sat*) can be termed 'positive' is against all experience where 'positiveness' and 'reality' are always cognised as coexistent.

Another important characteristic of the Śaṁkarite theory of Nescience is their assertion that *avidyā* is always removable at the rise of knowledge so much so that they have included 'sublation by knowledge' (*jñānanivartyatva*) as one of the five definitions of falsity (*pañcamithyātva*). Because *avidyā* is the material cause of all its illusions, its sublation at the rise of the knowledge of Brahman removes the whole cosmic illusion including the illusion of the individual self. This theory of the sublation of *avidyā* through knowledge is unacceptable to the Vallabhites because, as explained in the former pages, *avidyā* which is a power of God is removable not at the rise of knowledge but through the Will of God. The function of *vidyā* (knowledge) is to create such conditions that may invoke God's Divine Grace for freedom from *avidyā*, the cause of bondage, and not to destroy the

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* with *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 12.
2. Yasyāḥ kāryamidaṁ kṛtisnaṁ vyavahārāya kalpate,
   Nirvaktuṁ sā na śakyeti vacanaṁ vañcanārthakaṁ.
   (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 581)

original principle of nescience itself. Moreover, the Śaṁkarite equation of *vidya*, the limitative adjunct of jīva, with māya, the *upādhi* of Īśvara, by explaining them as different aspects of a single principle, is without any rhyme or reason. If both *avidyā* and *māyā* are traceable to a single principle of Nescience, then its sublation by even one wise-man would destroy the whole world-phenomena without providing occasion for any further philosophical teaching and scriptural instruction. Thus, the Advaitin's definition of *avidyā*, from the Vallabhite standpoint, is totally redundant and logically baseless. The next question demanding a satisfactory answer is : What is the relation between *avidyā* and Brahman? It cannot be contact (*saṁyoga*) [1] because both the relata, *avidyā* and Brahman, being ubiquitous (*vibhu*) there is no possibility of the relation of contact. It would also be illogical to imagine that this relation is one of superimposition (*adhyāsa*) because this superimposition would require another *avidyā* and so on *ad infinitum*. The only alternative left for the Advaitins is to imagine that the relation between Brahman and *avidyā* is essential to their nature (*svarūpalakṣaṇa*). But such a position would land them into fresh difficulties. It would imply that even the liberated souls are not free from the influence of Nescience. Moreover, because [2] the relation between Brahman and *avidyā* is beginningless the appearance of the individual soul as differentiated from Brahman would not only be interminable but no relation of cause and effect would be possible between '*avidyā*'s relationship with Brahman' and the 'differentiation of the jīvas' as contemplated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta because of their contemporaneity. Thus the Vallabhites conclude that the Śaṁkarite philosophy of Brahman as the locus (*āśraya*) of the beginningless principle of Nescience is logically untenable and invalid. Such a theory would prove that Brahman is Itself a *jīva* and, therefore, despicable. With such a character of Īśvara who would make Him the object of devotion? [3]

Refutation of the identity of jīva and Brahman.

The Śaṁkarite philosophy of the identity of the jīva and Brahman is a subject of virulent criticism by Vallabha [4] in his *Aṇubhāṣya*. He asks : What do the Māyāvādins mean by the denial of difference between the individual soul and Brahman? Do they intend

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 34.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa*, p. 706 to 707.

to establish the Brahman-hood of the jīva or do they desire to negate the very concept and existence of the phenomenal appearance of the individual soul. The former position is acceptable to the Vallabhites themselves because as mentioned in the *śruti* narrating the manifestation of the jīva from Brahman like sparks from blazing fire, the jīva is indubitably Brahman just as the sparks are fire itself. But it would be a mistake to contend that there is no Brahman apart from jīva in view of such Upaniṣadic texts that dictate that Brahman is omniscient, omnipotent, free from all sins etc. The latter position asserting the total annihilation of soul-hood is, however, inadmissible because it implies the destruction of the very identity of the individual soul even during the state of salvation (*mokṣa*). If no individual soul remains who shall enjoy this blissful state of *mokṣa*? This implies the futility of all efforts for its attainment.

Again, it may be asked : If the nature of jīva is imagined (*kalpita*), as asserted by the Advaitins, by whom is it imagined? Is it imagined by Brahman or by the jīva? It cannot be imagined by Brahman because It is free from any relation with *avidyā* as demonstrated above. Nor can it be imagined by jīva because the jīva is itself the object of this imagination. Thus the Śaṁkarite philosophy of jīva as having only an 'imagined existence' is illogical and irrelevant. The truth, according to Vallabha, is not that it is imagined by *ajñāna* but only that it is under the effect of *ajñāna*, a power of God.[1] The term, '*anṛtāpidhānā*', in the *śruti*, therefore means only that the individual soul is covered by *ajñana* and not that it is imagined by *ajñāna* as contended by the Advaitins. The individual soul, therefore, as professed by Vallabha, always maintains its identity; even prior to creation it subsists in Brahman as Its part or *aṁśa*.

Vallabhite interpretation of '*Ahaṁbrahmāsmi*' and '*Tattvamasi*'.

In the face of this criticism the Advaitins labour hard to justify their doctrine of the non-duality of jīva and Brahman on the testimony of such Upaniṣadic texts as, 'I am Brahman', 'Thou art That' etc. Yet, here also they miserably fail, as contended by the Vallabhites, and demonstrate their ignorance of the real meaning and intention of these *śrutis*. Vallabha explains that the text 'I am Brahman' is an ejaculation of the seer who through his knowledge of Brahman[2]

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 399.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra '*Śāstradṛṣṭyā tu upadeśo vāmadevavat*'.

and intensity of emotional devotion perceives Brahman and His attributes everywhere and in all so much so that all his senses, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and his very soul is infused with Brahman [1] and His attributes like that of Indra as described in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*. In this state the seer is so oblivious of his identity, due to the emotional perception of Brahman everywhere, even in his own self, that he cries out 'I am Brahman'. This state called *brahmabhāva* or *sarvātmabhāva* is not a state of the realization of a homogeneous Brahman Consciousness in which the jīva permanently loses his identity, as misconceived by the Advaitins, but a temporary state infused with Brahman and all His attributes, with consciousness as one of them. In the human life of the seer this is generally a temporary and a shifting state which is permanently available only to the liberated souls or the *mukta-jīvas*.[2]

Difference between *Brahma-bhāva* of Śaṁkara and Vallabha.

The text, '*Tat tvaṁ asi*' (Thou art That) occurring in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, according to Vallabha, is not a *mahāvākya* at all as it forms part of a section which should, as a whole, be treated as *Mahāvākya*; the purpose of this section is to impart knowledge about that by knowing which everything else becomes known. The aim and object of this particular section of the *Chāndogya* is, therefore, to impart instruction about Brahman which is the ground (*āśraya*) and the *aṁśī* of the whole universe including the individual soul. The Upaniṣad text, 'The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself'[3] is also an expression of the seer's state of Brahman-hood which is obtained by means of knowledge. The seer obtains that state of Brahman-hood when there is the manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) in him of the attributes of Brahman with the consequent emotional identification (*sphūrti*). This state of the seer, as explained in this particular mantra, is neither[4] a ubiquitous pervasion of Brahman-consciousness nor a state of identity but is only a state of *brahmabhāva* or *sarvātmabhāva* in which the individual soul only temporarily becomes oblivious of and loses its identity; it does not totally merge in Brahman. As explained by Puruṣottama,[5] in this manifested state of the realized-saint, though there

Vallabhite explanation of 'Tat tvaṁ asi'.

1. Ahaṁ brahmetyārṣeṇa darśanena tūpadeśaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 262)
2. *Prakāśa*, p. 265.
3. Brahmavedabrahmaiva bhavati. (*Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra 3, 2, 9).
4. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 263.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

is the dissolution of such senses as speech etc., like *asaṁprajñāta-samādhi*, there is no separation of the human body. Thus, Vallabha and his followers explain that the important Upaniṣadic texts cited by the Advaitins to prove their philosophy of real identity between jīva and Brahman are all against them. The scriptures nowhere demonstrate the truth of the Śaṁkarite speculation that the individual soul is identical with Brahman.

In the history of Post Śaṁkarite Philosophy different attempts have been made to explain the *modus operandi* of the conditioning and limitation of Brahman through its *upādhi*, the *avidyā* or *māyā*. As the individual soul, in this system, is supposed to be limited by *avidyā*, its phenomenal appearance and limitation has been explained in three different ways which gave birth to three important schools of thought, viz., 'The Definition Theory' (*Avacchedavāda*), the 'Reflection Theory' (*Pratibimbavāda*) and the 'Condition Theory'. Since the 'Reflection Theory' or *Pratibimbavāda* of the Vivaraṇa School has been the dominant view generally adopted by the majority of the Advaitins, Vallabha and his followers, selected it for criticism and refutation of the Advaita position. We, therefore, venture to give a cursory account of their criticism before moving on to the next problem about the nature of 'World and Creation'.

(J) REFUTATION OF THE REFLECTION-THEORY

The Advaitic view-point.

Śaṁkara's commentary on the sūtra '*Ābhāsa eva ca*' is probably the foundational enunciation of the reflection-theory of Vedānta philosophy. He writes, "This jīva is a reflection of the Supreme Ātman like the reflection of sun in water. It is neither the Paramātman directly nor a different substance. Therefore, just as the movement of sun's reflection in one water-vase does not create any tremor in the reflections of other water-vases, the actions and fruits of one jīva do not associate themselves with those of the other jīvas."[1] This explanation of the phenomenal appearance of the individual soul from Brahman through the concept of reflection is the basis of the Post Śaṁkarite reflectionism of Sarvajñātamuni and that of the Vivaraṇa Prasthāna[2] whose thinkers have differed on the question whether the

1. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 302.
2. Narain K. : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 277-278.

upādhi that contains the reflection is the causal *avidyā* or its product, the *antaḥkaraṇa*. The Vivaraṇa School or the Vivaraṇa Prasthāna, as it is called, conceives of a unitary principle as the material cause of world-superimposition. This principle called *avidyā*, causes the differentiation of the individual soul from Brahman. The reflection of consciousness in *avidyā* is called jīva, whereas, the prototype (*bimba*) is called Īśvara. Sarvajñātamuni, the author of *Saṁkṣepaśārīraka*, however, held a different view. According to him, Īśvara is the reflection of consciousness in *avidyā* or *māyā* — since for him both *māyā* and *avidyā* are identical — which is the only principle of phenomenality responsible for the manifestation of the Ultimate Reality as cosmos, whereas, jīva is the reflection of consciousness in *antaḥkaraṇa* which is only an effect of *avidyā* with the predominance of the veiling-power (*āvaraṇa-śakti*). Thus, we have in the Reflection Theory of Vedānta two prevalent views, one holding *avidyā* as the *upādhi* of the jīva and the other contemplating that the reflection of consciousness in the *antaḥkaraṇa* creates the phenomenal appearance of the individual soul (*jīvātman*).

The Vallabhite refutation.

The Śaṁkarite Reflection-Theory, as reproduced above, has been vehemently criticised by Vallabha and his followers in their principal works where they have not only produced arguments to demonstrate that it is absurd to apply the concept of reflection between Brahman and *avidyā* but have stressed that the Advaitin's belief in the unreality or *mithyātva* of 'reflection' is itself fallacious. Vallabha, in his *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*[1], contends that there are certain conditions requisite for the reflection of an object on a transparent surface. Firstly, the reflected object should possess such qualities as form, colour, contact, action etc. The cognition or apprehension of these qualities in the *upādhi* is what we call 'reflection'. Thus reflection reproduces not only the form and colour of the prototype (*bimba*) but also its measure, separation, otherness etc. Secondly, the qualities of the prototype (*bimba*) are not actually passed on to its reflected-image, just as the real attributes of the moon are not transferred to its reflection in water. Thirdly, a reflection is affected both by the qualities of the ground or the *upādhi* in which it takes place and the attributes of

1. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 175 to 180.

the prototype whose image is reflected therein. The reflection of the sun's orb in water contains the sun's splendour and light as well as the filth of the water on account of which its brilliance is minimised. Fourthly, a 'reflection' is neither real, like a worldly object, e.g., a jar, nor unreal, like an illusion. It is different, in nature, both from the 'real' and the 'false'. Vallabha contends that 'reflection' is a separate creation [1] of God possessing an important characteristic that it is devoid of any particular measure and is also capable of acquiring any measure, small or big whatsoever. It is an important contention of Vallabhite philosophy that though 'reflection' is an *ābhāsa* it is not false; to them, *ābhāsa* means simply the manifestation of something in various innumerable forms akin to itself which obviously demonstrates the truth that it is not false as believed by the Advaitins. Reflection in Vallabhism is only a manifested aspect of God like His other manifestations.

These necessary conditions of reflection are conspicuous by their absence in the Advaitin's Pratibimbavāda (Reflection-theory) and demonstrate the absurdity of their arguments. As argued by Viṭṭhala-nātha, how [2] can Brahman which is without any form or colour reflect itself in *avidyā* which being impure is an unworthy ground for the reflection of pure *cit*? The Advaitins very often reply that just as *ākāśa*. which is without any form or colour, is reflected in water-vase, the consciousness of Brahman can also reflect itself in *avidyā*. But the Vallabhites retort that this is a misunderstanding of the whole phenomenon of the apparent reflection of *ākāśa* (ether). They contend that when *ākāśa* appears to be reflected it is actually the light associated [3] with it, possessing both form and colour, that is reflected in water with the result that there is a false [4] apprehension of the reflection of form-less and colour-less *ākāśa* which, otherwise, is not a fact. There is, therefore, no exception to the rule that only objects having form and colour are capable of reflection. The Advaitin's thesis of the reflection of Brahman in *avidyā* or its product *antaḥkaraṇa* is, therefore, illogical and absurd.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 50).
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 24.
3. *Ibid*, p. 24.
4. Vastutastu prabhāmaṇḍalasya eva rūpavataḥ pratibimbaḥ.
(*Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 183).

Again, if we minutely observe even a single case of reflection we shall be convinced [1] of the rule that no reflection is possible within the limits of the space which is occupied by the object to be reflected. In other words, the object and its reflection are never spatially [2] coexistent just as there is no reflection of the line existing in a mirror. Now because Brahman is all-pervasive, there is no sense in arguing about the possibility of its reflection in *avidyā* that has no separate status as reality apart from Brahman. Viṭṭhalanātha further argues that the reflection- theory is contradictory to the *Muṇḍaka śruti* which tells, "Two birds that are ever associated and have similar names cling to the same tree" [3]; This *śruti* speaks of the coexistence of both the jīva and the Paramātman in the same locus which is impossible on the presuppositions of Pratibimbavāda.

Moreover, if the Advaitins believe that the jīva is the reflection of Brahman in *avidyā* and on the other hand also philosophise that emancipation (*mokṣa*) is only the destruction [4] of *avidyā* they indirectly support the conclusion that salvation (*mokṣa*) is only the destruction the very nature and identity of the jīvātman which is highly preposterous. It would mean that the real aim and objective of all scriptural teachings and human activity in Vedānta philosophy is only the negation of the individual soul itself. Thus, this doctrine is a fatal blow to all mundane and spiritual aspirations of mankind and an exposition of the futility of the Advaitin's own endeavour in establishing and propagating his own philosophical doctrines; all the four kinds of *puruṣārthas* or human aims of life as taught in the *śāstras* would be rendered useless. Further, if the whole cosmos (*prapañca*) is (*mithyā*) then the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, which also form part of the universe, being also false the results accruing from their teachings would be fallacious and invalid. The Advaitins, however, reply this objection by arguing that just as in the dreams, which are false, the people act and aspire for the results, the Vedas, even if they happen to exist in the *mithyā-prapañca*, can instruct for the achievement of the various *puruṣārthas*. Against this, the Vallabhites [5] retort that the dreamer when he acts in dream does so with the full conviction that the dream is true. It is only after awakening that its falsity is understood. There

1. Yatra yadasti tatra tanna pratibimbate, darpaṇarekhāvat.
(*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 24.)
2. *Prakāśa* on *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 182.
3. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (3, 1, 1).
4. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ* with *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 25.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 26-27.

is, therefore, no sense in the Advaitin's argument from the analogy of dream. Moreover, when a man after learning from the Advaita philosophy understands that the Vedas and other scriptures are false how can he act in accordance with their instructions? How can anyone be satisfied in his *vyāvahārika* existence with the food taken by him in the dream? Therefore, the unreal teachings of a *guru* (teacher) can never lead to the acquisition of the transcendental reality of Brahman.

In our daily lives, we always observe that when a man looks into a mirror [1] the reflection of his face is caused on account of his relation with the defects subsisting in the mirror. Now, on this analogy, if we acknowledge Brahman's relation with *avidyā* to be a fact, we must admit that Brahman too is a kind of jīva; but such a conclusion would destroy the veracity of the scriptural instruction that Brahman is the seer, the ruler and the controller because such attributes are impossible in a jīva. Moreover, as argued by Viṭṭhalanātha, no philosophy of *jīvanmukti* is possible on the basis of Reflection-Theory, whether of the Vivaraṇa School or as preached by Sarvajñātamuni. On the Vivaraṇite assumption that the jīva is a reflection of consciousness in primal *avidyā* the destruction of *avidyā* consequent upon Brahman-realization of a single wise-soul would bring in the instantaneous release and the fall of the bodies of all the jivas in the cosmic-order. Thus, there is no possibility of any *jīvanmukti* at all. Sarvajñātamuni's contention that the individual soul is the reflection of *cit* in *antaḥkaraṇa* is also a source of trouble. Because in the *jīvanmukti* state, the *antaḥkaraṇa* of the seer is not destroyed, he would continue to be under the impact of *saṁsāra* and there would thus be no *jīvanmukti* for him. The Vallabhites, therefore, argue that there is no valid ground for the Advaitin's belief in *jīvanmukti* [2] state of deliverance if he pins his faith on any one of the different interpretations of Pratibimbavāda. To Vallabha and his followers, the Advaitic philosophy of Reflection is an argument of bad analogy where the real nature of reflection (*pratibimba*) has been misunderstood and misrepresented to explain the phenomenality of the individual soul and its transcendental identity with Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, on the basis of a principle- the Nescience- whose nature and character itself is quite inexplicable and unclear.

1. *Ibid*, p. 27.
2. Puruṣottama gives an account of six different types of Pratibimbavāda in his *Suvarṇasūtra* (p. 32) and *Jīvapratibimbatvakhaṇḍana* (included in *Vādāvalī* at p. 171) which contains a comprehensive account of the Vallabhite refutation of the Reflection-Theory.

CHAPTER X

WORLD AND CREATION

(A) METAPHYSICAL STATUS OF WORLD

World-order an aspect of Brahman and real.

In the former chapters of this book, we have already undertaken the exposition of the principal Vallabhite tenet that Brahman, Saccidānanda, which is both immanent and transcendental, is the only Reality and all else is only a manifestation and aspect of Its Supreme Status, the Puruṣottama, which like Its other statuses and orders of Being maintains and manifests Itself in the tri-une aspect of the divine (*ādhidaivika*), the spiritual (*ādhyātmika*) and the elemental (*ādhibhautika*) of which the latter two sustain what is known and termed as 'world' of the phenomenal cosmos. We have also discussed that this Brahman or Absolute propelled by, so to say, the desire to be many is manifested, in accordance with the *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva* theory, into the world of Spirit and Matter to which It is the inherent as well as the instrumental cause and that their emergence or evolution is not to be regarded as a novel creation but only a manifestation of the Divine. It, therefore, transpires, without any iota of doubt, that cosmos, the world-order, is only Brahman and Kṛṣṇa in a special status of Being (the elemental) just as being coiled is only a special position of a serpent. Because the world-order is nothing but an aspect of the Absolute, it is also as real as the Absolute Itself. Not only this, every occurrence on the limitless expanded surface of the universe, each fact of creation and dissolution, being only a manifestation or concealment of the Absolute is also as real as the Absolute Itself. As the *śruti* observes, "All this (*prapañca*) is of the nature of Ātman".[1] Vallabha too elucidates this point when he writes, "Hari is the only *prameya* who is both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*",[2] and that "the *prapañca* is of the nature of Brahman, is Its effect becoming so through māyā".[3]

1. Aitadātmyamidaṁ sarvaṁ.
2. Prameyaṁ harirevaikaḥ saguṇo nirguṇaśca saḥ.
3. *Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, śloka 84.

Brahmavāda or the Śuddhādvaita system of philosophy thus avers that the world-order or the phenomenal cosmos is the Absolute or Brahman Itself.

The opponents of this philosophical standpoint may try to condemn this theory on the ground that because the world is [1] created it is non-eternal; it is a product of *Prakṛti* and consists of an infinite veriety of differences. How can such a world be identified with the Absolute or Brahman that transcends all phenomenal and empirical attributes? Vallabha and his followers refute this criticism, drawing strength for their arguments from the theory of manifestation and concealment which happens to be the sheet-anchor of Vallabhism. As already discussed in the chapter on 'Causality', the Vallabhites always explain all origination and destruction as facts of manifestation and concealment; as such, the creation and destruction of universe being only a matter of *āvirbhāva* and *tirobhāva* in Brahman, caused by its own *māyā* or Its inscrutable and mysterious faculty, does not create any contradiction with the Vallabhite theory of *prapañca*, the world-order, as an aspect or status of Brahman. Moreover, if the phenomenal world be contemplated as an adventitious property, associating itself with Brahman, like the liquefaction (*dravatva*) of butter (*ghee*), the presence of Brahman and Its attributes is not at all endangered. Because Brahman is the only Reality which is also the ground of the appearance of phenomenal cosmos, Its attributes too are always compresent on the basis of identity (*tādātmya*). Thus, taking for granted, for the sake of argument, that the characteristics of world are novel and adventitious, they do not accord sufficient reason for the refutation of the theory that the 'world-order' is an aspect of Brahman and its creation is only an emergence, a projection or evolution in the sense of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*). The objection that the world of matter only evolves out of *Prakṛti* or that it consists of difference does not make any dent in the irreproachability of the Vallabhite thesis. All such arguments, as contended by Puruṣottama, are an outcome of pure logic, a product of *rājasika* intellect, without any support from the scriptural texts which unequivocally declare, 'All this is only Ātman',[2] 'This becomes this all'[3] and 'All this is only Puruṣa'.[4]

Origination and destruction only 'manifestation' and 'concealment'.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 54.
2. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (7, 25, 2).
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (1, 4, 10).
4. *Ṛg Veda*, mantra (X, 90, 2).

Most of the philosophical systems in Indian Thought owing allegiance to the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtra* generally recognise the truth of the conviction that Brahman is the ground and foundation of world-appearance; yet, there is no unanimity among them on the problem of the nature of the world-appearance or *prapañca*. Śaṁkara and his followers were convinced that there can be no rational justification for the truth and reality of phenomenal cosmos in the context of the philosophy of an indeterminate, homogeneous, transcendental Reality, the Brahman-Consciousness which is the real purport of Upaniṣadic teachings. Others, like Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha etc. of the Vaiṣṇavite tradition stressing upon the reality of the world-order and its creation denounced the Śaṁkarite contention as a deliberate misrepresentation of the true meaning and purport of the Vedas and the Upaniṣadic texts and a camouflage at the hands of a crypto Buddhist and a thief who had entered into the order. They were all agog because, as specifically mentioned by Vallabha, any idea of the unreality and falsity of the world-order is necessarily contradictory [1] to and at variance with the philosophy of devotion and service to God with love. Vallabha and his followers, therefore, like other Vaiṣṇavites, refuted Śaṁkarite philosophy of the falsity of world or Illusionism, though in this endeavour they could hardly match the dialectical calibre of Jaya Tīrtha and Vyāsa Tīrtha of the Mādhva school.

Śaṁkarite denial of world's reality.

Vaiṣṇavite reaction.

Śaṁkara, in his various commentaries, developed that it would be illogical to ascribe any reality to world-phenomenon with its objects and categories because they are inexplicable in any of the modes of human understanding, such as 'existent' and 'non-existent', in the context of the doctrine that the Ultimate Reality is indeterminate, pure, impartite and without a second. Considering them as 'existent' would jeopardize the philosophy of Brahman without a second, whereas, the idea that they are 'non-existent' would render their perceptibility and experience impossible. Thus, the world-appearance belongs to an order of reality which is different from both 'real' and 'unreal' (*sadasadvilakṣaṇa*), i.e., inexplicable or

Śaṁkarite argument in favour of the falsity of world.

1. Prapañcameva mithyā iti uktvā śuddham bhajanam vārayanti. (*Prakāśa* on *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārika, 23).

anirvacanīya as termed by the Advaitins. In order to be consistent with their philosophy of the non-dual character of the Ultimate Reality, Śaṁkara and his followers were constrained to reduce the ultimate character of 'world' to an *anirvacanīya* and superimposed status with Nescience or *Avidyā* as its material-cause. The Post Śaṁkarites in their formulation of the philosophy of world advanced certain arguments to establish the falsity of world-phenomena. Firstly, they contended, it would be impossible to explain the relation between the subject (*dṛk*) and the object (*dṛśya*) on the assumption of the reality of world because this relation is explicable in no way other than treating it as superimposed (*ādhyāsika*). Secondly, in the Upaniṣads, there is a reference to the removability of world-phenomena by knowledge (*jñāna*). In the *Chāndogya* we have the assertion that all becomes known through the knowledge of One. These statements from the scriptural texts would continue to be nonsensical unless supported by the judgement that the nature of the 'world' is *anirvacanīya* because sublation by knowledge is possible only when the sublated entity is of *anirvacanīya* character. The Śaṁkarites were so convinced of this thesis that they included *jñāna-nivartyatva* (sublation by knowledge) as one of the five definitions of *mithyātva*. Similarly, knowledge of the one can lead to the knowledge of the many only when the 'many' is resolved into a transcendental whole; knowledge can become universal only when it transcends individuality. Thus the *śrutis* by preaching the knowledge of all through the knowledge of one accord a tacit approval to the philosophy of the falsity of objects or the world-phenomena as a whole. Thirdly, in accordance with their criterion that what is non-contradicted alone is real, they, on the analogy of dream, endeavoured to establish that because the waking-state is also contradicted on the realization of the fourth state, the Turīya, its sublatable character provides a valid ground and argument for the unreal character of phenomena as they appear in waking life.

Gauḍapāda's arguments.

In the Vaitathya Prakaraṇa of his *Kārikās*, Gauḍapāda ventured to establish the unreal character of world on the basis of analogy. His argument proceeds by tracing those conditions in the waking-state that are *prima facie* present in the dream-state whose unreal character is indubitable. These conditions or reasons employed by Gauḍapāda for proving the falsity of world are : (1) objectivity to experience, (2) the presence of subject-object-dualism, and (3) the beginning and end in time, i.e., non-

eternality. The Post Śaṁkarite philosophers, however, advanced inferential arguments to prove [1] the falsity of world employing 'perceptibility' (*dṛśyatva*), 'materiality' (*jaḍatva*), 'finitude' (*paricchinnatva*) and *aṁśatva* (part-hood) as reasons (*hetu*) for establishing their conclusion. The natural implication of this Illusionism was the Śaṁkarite denunciation of 'creation' as a metaphysical fact. As the principle of causation in Advaitic logic has no ontological status, the Advaitins replaced the concept of material causality as subsuming real transformation by the doctrine of *Vivartta* as the ultimate explanation of the perennial flow of cosmic events which is nothing but the abandonment of the idea of causation — as understood within the realm of experience — at the last stage in the hierarchy of causal events when a relation between the Supreme Cause as comprehensible to the human intellect and the Ultimate Reality is sought to be established. Though till the 'unmanifested state', which is the seed of all manifestations of Name and Form, the principle of causation is applicable, yet when we leap into the transcendent, we leave the principle of causation as that of the other world. The relation between Brahman and the 'unmanifested state' is inexplicable. The world is not an outcome of a real causal activity but is an appearance having its reason in *māyā*, a principle without which no satisfactory explanation of the problem of creation is ever possible.[2] The inconsistency of the very idea of creation with regard to the ultimate, transcendental and uncaused Brahman was elaborated by Gauḍapāda in his *Māḍūkya-kārika* specifically on two grounds : firstly, that the idea of creation from the Absolute or the Real is logically inconceivable in any way other than false appearance caused by *māyā* and, secondly, by bringing to light the logical fallacies and contradictions involved in the proposition that the idea of causation has a real basis. He, therefore, propounded the doctrine of *Ajātivāda* meaning that there is no creation.

Ajātivāda.

(B) REFUTATION OF THE UNREALITY OF WORLD

For Vallabha and his followers the *Paurāṇika-text*, 'O! Great Seer! the whole of this world is that indestructible eternal Truth', enjoins two essential truths, firstly, that the cosmic-universe is absolutely real

1. K. Narain : *A Critique of Mādhva Refutation of the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta*, p. 245 to 268.
2. *Ibid*, p. 268 to 269.

and, secondly, that it is only an aspect and manifestation of Brahman. In none of the eleven schools of Vedic Education is there even the slightest hint, according to Vallabha, about the falsity of world which has been engineered and manipulated as a theory by Gauḍapāda and Śaṁkara under the influence of Buddhism employing even some of the arguments that are basically Buddhistic in character. The Vallabhites, therefore, endeavoured to establish the reality of the world-order, firstly, by venturing a refutation of the Advaitic philosophy of the falsity of world or *Māyāvāda* and then replenishing it with concrete and positive proofs demonstrating its reality.

Argument from experience.

Like all other realists, even to Vallabha and his followers, experience is the real basis of our conviction in the reality of the external-world. According to Viṭṭhalanātha, if the world is not real there can possibly be no ground for our experience about it; experience itself is sufficient warranty of truth which can, under no circumstances, be disowned by any scriptural-text whatsoever, This argument from experience is rejected by the Advaitins, as already observed, on the ground that 'cognizability' or 'perceptibility' is no reason for the truth of an object; on the contrary, as argued by the Post Śaṁkarites, it is a sure and valid reason (*hetu*) for justifying the falsity (*mithyātva*) of the world-order on the basis of such illustrations as the dream, the illusion of conch-shell-silver, etc., where the unreality of the experience is proved by their posterior contradiction. So for the Śaṁkarites, it is non-contradiction that serves as an infallible criterion of reality and not experience.

In the face of this objection, Viṭṭhalanātha, in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, questions:[2] Even if, for the sake of argument, we may acquiesce in the philosophy of the falsity of world, how can the Advaitins explain the fact of the experience of the external-world? If they argue that just as a dream-experience is caused by *vāsanas*— the latent impressions— the experience of the external-world is also produced by *vāsanās* they would be committing a fallacy similar to that of a Vijñānavādin Buddhist on account of their failure to understand that in the absence of the reality of world there can be no *vāsanā* since all *vāsanās* depend for

1. Na hi jagatpratītiḥ śrutisiddhā yena pūrvaṁ bodhayati paścānniṣedhati ityucyate. Kiñtu lokasiddhā. (*Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 14).
2. *Ibid*, p. 14 to 15.

their existence on some prior experience. On the other hand, if the Advaitins by taking resort to the doctrine of the beginningless flow of *vāsanās* try to explain each human experience on the basis of this eternal flux of impressions, how can they explain the difference in the variegated human experiences? As there is no possibility of any other cause that [1] might create this difference in experience, the philosophy of the eternal flow of *vāsanās* as the explanation of the knowledge of external-existence is absurd and illogical. Moreover, as the argument runs, the knowledge of the external-world is produced by *vāsanās* that in turn are created by the knowledge of the objects. There is, thus, a clear fallacy [2] of interdependence and the fallacy of argument in circle in the Advaitic argument of the falsity of world. Again, if the Śaṁkarites try to explain this fact through *avidyā* (nescience) they would find themselves ultimately in a blind alley for their doctrine of *avidyā* or *māyā* [3] as the material cause of world-superimposition is logically preposterous and against the verdict of the scriptural-texts on several counts. Very much, on the footprints of Rāmānuja, Vallabha and his followers try to demolish the Advaitic thesis of *avidyā* on the ground of the inexplicability of its nature and the impossibility of its having a ground (*āśraya*) and object (*viṣaya*).

**The problem of the nature of *avidyā*, inclusive of the Vallabhite refutation of the Śaṁkarite conception, has already been discussed in the chapter 'The Philosophy of Individual Soul' where the theory of the inexplicability (*anirvacanīyatā*) of its character has been exploded, from the Vallabhite standpoint, asserting that *avidyā* as a power of God is as much real as any other Divine manifestation. Apart from the irrationality and futility of the Śaṁkarite theory about the nature of *avidyā*, their answers to the question as to what are the locus (*adhiṣṭhāna*) and the object (*viṣaya*) of *avidyā* are also refutable and unsustainable.Regarding the question of the locus or support of *avidyā*, the Advaitins have only two alternatives; either to accept the individual soul (*jīva*) or Brahman as the support. The former alternative, however, is impossible because the jīva is itself a product of *avidyā*; as such, the Śaṁkarites have to recognise that Brahman is the support of *avidyā*. But Brahman, being indeterminate and pure

The Advaitic *avidyā* is without locus.

1. *Ibid*, p. 14.
2. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 22.
3. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 15.

self-consciousness is naturally opposed to *avidyā* whose illusory character is supposed to be sublated at the dawn of Brahman-realization. There is, thus, no possibility of the superimposition of the world-order and its consequent experience without the knowledge of the support (*adhiṣṭhāna*) which is a necessary condition of any kind of superimposition. The Advaitins may, however, retort that even if Brahman is indeterminate and all-pervasive there is no irrationality in adopting the theory of the superimposition of world on It on the analogy of the superimposition of dirt on the surface of *ākāśa* which is imperceptible and unsubstantial. But, for the Vallabhites, such an argument is born out of a complete misunderstanding [1] of the situation in which the superimposition of dirt (*malinatā*) takes place. The real reason and the cause of this superimposition is the capacity of the substance existing within the visible vacancy of the so-called *ākāśa*. It would be a totally mistaken view to conceive of the *ākāśa* as a pure void or vacancy as contemplated in the Śaṁkarite illustration. Again, the search for an 'object' of *avidyā* is also basically futile because Brahman, which is of the nature and essence of pure-consciousness can never be the object of *avidyā*'s concealment. Fundamentally [2] what is of the nature of knowledge is never the object of ignorance; it is, therefore, irrelevant to assert that Brahman is the object of *avidyā*. Moreover, the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* explicitly denounces the attribution of objectivity to Ātman when it observes, "The self-existent Lord afflicted the outgoing senses; therefore, one sees the outer things and not the inner Self." [3] Brahman is, therefore, not an object of *avidyā* as imagined by the Śaṁkarites. Further, the very idea that Brahman can be the support and object of *avidyā* would introduce to It the concept of attribution and differentiation (*saviṣayatā*) against the basic Śaṁkarite philosophy of Its indifferentiation, and establish that Brahman is ignorant. The only valid possibility, for the Advaitins, is to regard the jīva as the ground of *avidyā*. But then such a contention would imply for the Advaitins insurmountable difficulties in explaining their Pratibimba-vāda Because the *avidyā* of the individual soul is always defective (with *doṣa*) and, therefore, non-transparent,

Advatin's *avidyā* is without object.

Impossibility of Reflectionism.

1. *Suvarṇasūtra*, p. 70.
2. *Śrībhāṣya*, p. 148.
3. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 1, 1).

there can be no reflection whatsoever. Moreover, the very consideration of Brahman as the prototype (*bimba*) of reflection would prove that It is differentiated or *saviśeṣa*, violating the Śaṁkarite philosophy of Its attributeless and undifferentiated character.

We have already observed that the Advaitins laid considerable stress on the scriptural texts, proclaimng the removal of the world-order through the knowledge of the essential nature of Brahman. They argued that because sublation by knowledge is possible only when the sublated entity is *mithyā* or inexplicable (*anirvacanīya*) in character the *śrutis* by propounding the theory of the sublation of *prapañca* by knowledge implied, by implication, its *mithyātva*. Both Vallabha and Viṭṭhalanātha refuted this argument by contending that the Upaniṣads, when they affirm the removal or [1] sublation of world, they refer not to *prapañca* but to *saṁsāra*, a point which we have already discussed in detail. The Śaṁkarites have gravely misunderstood the real purport of the Upaniṣadic concept of *jñānanivartyatva* which never aims at proving the falsity of world.

Śrutis refer only to the sublation of *saṁsāra* by knowledge.

The Advaitic inference of the falsity of world on the basis of 'cognizability' or 'perceptibility' (*dṛśyatva*), on the analogy of dream-experience, is equally unjustified because it loses sight of the differentiating characteristics of a 'dream' from a waking-experience whose difference from dream-experience is well established in the sūtra, '*Vaidharmyācca na svapnādivat*' [2]. As Vallabha explains, "In the dreams, either during the dreaming state or at its termination (i.e., when awake), the things are obtained otherwise. But not so during the waking state. Even after a year a cognised pillar continues or exists to be a pillar (without any sublation)." [3] Gauḍapāda's argument that because both the dream and the waking - state have perceptibility, subject-object-dualism and non-eternality common to them they should be treated as similar is, therefore, denounced by the Vallabhites on the ground that the mere fact of possessing certain properties in utter disregard of dissimilar features is a bankruptcy of logical sense and reason. The fact of the

Refutation of argument with 'perceptibility' as reason.

Refutation of Gauḍapāḍa.

1. Bhūyaścānte viśvamāyānivṛttiḥ.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 2, 29).
3. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 2, 29).

persistence of the world-order is a sufficient guarantee of its non-illusory character which can hardly be denounced by any attempt at tracing similarity between the 'dream' and the 'waking-state'. This particular Śaṁkarite argument is, therefore, absolutely irrelevant. Moreover, the argument that *avidyā* alone is removable by knowledge would mean that sin (*pāpa*)[1] and virtue (*puṇya*) which are not the products of *avidyā* are not destructible at the hands of knowledge implying that the whole of the world-order is not sublatable by knowledge. If, on the other hand, sin is also treated as a product of *avidyā*, the very destruction of even a single sin would sublate the whole world-phenomena and bring instantaneous deliverance to all mankind.

Refutation of the argument from non-eternality.

The argument that what is non-eternal is false is also mistaken because the beginning and end of a thing can be explained on the basis of *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva*-theory without involving any idea of their falsity at all. It is true that the world-order has a beginning and an end but here 'creation' and 'dissolution' only imply their manifestation and concealment and not their falsity or illusoriness. As argued by Puruṣottama, *vikāra*[2] or modification can be explained with equal justification by resorting to the theory of manifestation and concealment in utter disregard of the possibility of their *mithyātva*. Moreover, as already discussed in the chapter, 'The Philosophy of Individual Soul', no satisfactory relation between *avidyā* and Brahman is conceivable that may give credence to the Advaitin's philosophy of beginningless *avidyā* as the material-cause of the superimposition of the world-order. Apart from this, so the Vallabhites argue, the doctrine of the falsity of world would strike hard at the very root of the Advaitic concepts of *jīvanmukti*, the utility of scriptural instruction, the plausibility of knowledge as an instrument of deliverance because all these would also be false just as when the dream is false the elephant perceived in that dream is also false. The Vallabhites, therefore, like other Vaiṣṇavites, profess that the Śaṁkarite thesis of the falsity of world is a pernicious misinformation for misleading people. Contrary to the philosophy of Illusionism, they also advance arguments, on the authority of the scriptural texts, to demonstrate that the cosmic-universe, being an aspect of Brahman, is as real as Brahman.

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 63 with *Suvarṇasūtra* (at p. 71).
2. *Sṛṣṭibhedavāda* included in *Vādāvali*, p. 103.

Reality of world established on the basis of testimony.

In the chapter, 'The Nature of Reality', of this book we have explained the Vallabhite contention that the causality of Brahman in the creation, sustenance and destruction of world must be construed in the sense that He is the agent (*kartā*) of this stupendous creation. In his commentary on the sūtra '*Janmādyasya yataḥ śāstrayonitvāt*',[1] Vallabha forcefully asserts that the Vedas unambiguously declare that Brahman is the agent or the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the mighty universe which naturally implies the supernatural (*alaukika*) character of His agency as well as the reality of the world-order which it so obtains from the presence of Brahman in its appearance.

The world is real because it is a manifested-aspect of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, whose *sat* or the existence-attribute is manifested in Matter, whereas, the *cit* or the attribute of consciousness is revealed in the individual soul. Though there is such a prominence of the '*sat*' and '*cit*' attributes in Matter and Soul that they appear to manifest only '*sat*' and 'both *sat* and *cit*' in them respectively with an almost total concealment of the attribute of Bliss, yet it would be a mistake to imagine that they are absolutely bereft of Brahman's Bliss. Though Bliss is not manifested in Matter and Soul yet it subsists there as the ground for a future possibility of its manifestation in the individual soul possessing a higher degree of propensity to its manifestation. When the *śrutis* declare Brahman to be the creator, etc., of the world-order how can it be anything different from real?

The Advaitins very often argue that the philosophy of the reality of world and the real agency of Brahman is diametrically opposed to such *śrutis* that declare Him to be *niṣkala* and *asthūla* (not gross) and beyond all determinations and specifications. The Vallabhites, however, retort that these scriptural texts do not ascribe a blanket and universal denial of all attribution; instead, they only negate[2] the presence of natural (*laukika*) and physical (*prākṛtika*) qualities. All these *śrutis* while issuing a denial of attributes simultaneously assert in the same context the presence of divine or *alaukika* attributes in Brahman. This clearly discloses their intention that Brahman notwithstanding His transcendence of all phenomenal attribution is the repository of all such qualities that are divine, transcendent and

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (1, 1, 2).
2. *Vidvanmaṇḍanam*, p. 12, with *Suvarṇasūtra* (at p. 21).

supernatural. The *kartṛtva* of Brahman is, therefore, real. The world which He so creates, sustains and destroys is also real without any iota of doubt.

Vallabha's thesis that creation is real.

It is thus apparent that Vallabha who is a vociferous advocate of the reality of world may also be an ardent advocate of the reality of 'creation' as a fact. He, like other Vaiṣṇavites, pooh-poohs the very idea that the concept of causality is a phenomenal category though his interpretation of causation is somewhat different as we have already discussed. Yet this doctrine of real creator is not an outcome of a cosmological inference. To Vallabha the truth and certainty of this doctrine draws its strength only from the *śrutis* and not from any inferential human speculation; it is, however, a different matter if 'inference' as a *pramāṇa* may also subscribe to the scriptural standpoint in which case the validity of the inference would be vouchsafed.

The Advaitins very often argue that as there are several references indicating the falsity of world not only in the Upaniṣads but in the *Bhāgavata* as well, how can the doctrine of the reality of world-phenomena be accepted? The Vallabhites refute this criticism by contending that the scriptural dictations about the nature of world as *māyā* are not intended to justify the falsity of world but simply to inculcate a feeling of disenchantment and renunciation (*vairāgya*) towards the[1] egoistic and differential human approach (*bhedadṛṣṭi*) which is an aspect of *saṁsāra* caused by ignorance. Neither the Upaniṣads nor the *Bhāgavata* ever intended to proclaim a philosophy of world-negation. On the contrary, there is a host of such texts such as, 'All this is Ātman', 'All this that is, was and shall be is only *Puruṣa*', 'There was only truth', etc., that speak of the reality of world (*prapañca*) and the fact that it is just an aspect and status of Brahman (*Brahmātmatvaṁ*).

(C) DOCTRINE OF CREATION

The foregoing Vallabhite refutation of the Śaṁkarite philosophy of the falsity of world effectively destroys and discards the Śaṁkarite denunciation of creation as a metaphysical fact on the ground that

1. *Sṛṣṭibhedavāda* incorporated in *Vādāvali*, p. 105.
   Sa eva purāṇeṣu vairāgyārthaṁ nirūpyate.
   (*Prakāśa* on *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 275, śloka 82).

causality being specifically a phenomenal category any theory of a real transformation or creation is redundant and the only satisfactory account of world-appearance is the doctrine of *vivartta*. Vallabha and his followers repeatedly emphasised that all the difficulties raised by Gauḍapāda, Śaṁkara and his followers against the reality and truth of creation can be satisfactorily resolved on the assumption of the world-order as emanating or evolving out of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman in accordance with the suppositions of the *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva-theory*, the bed-rock of the Vallabhite philosophy of creation. Creation to Vallabha is, therefore, a real and a metaphysical fact being manifested or evolved out of Brahman at His will to be many and to create; dissolution, too, is a metaphysical fact arising out of the Lord's Wish to conceal the whole manifestation in Himself when He desires to enjoy His Bliss in himself (*ātmaramaṇa*).

Problems involved in the theory of real creation.

The philosophy of a real creation has given rise to a very formidable question that has vexed the minds of all the thinkers since the times of Bādarāyaṇa himself. To those, like the Śaṁkarites, who simply try to wish away this problem by either denying the fact of creation itself or by treating it as a mere *arthavāda*, the problem may not be so menacing but to the Vaiṣṇavites of all creeds and cults who have an eternal faith in God being the creator of this real world the problem is really a hard task. The question is : What is the purpose of creation? If Brahman is unborn and desireless (*āptakāma*), as declared in the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā*, why did He create this world of sorrows and sufferings, the high and low, a disgusting place of meanness, cheating, envy and all-pervasive egoism? Is this God, in his dispensation of cruelty and apparent partiality, worthy of His innate attributes of omniscience and omnipotence? The problem, thus, demands answers to two questions : (1) What propelled the desireless Divinity to create this world? and (2) What is the explanation for the creation of this unethical and depraved world-order?

(a) *Purpose of Creation*

Vallabha creation is *Ātmasṛṣṭi*.

Śrī Vallabha's philosophy of Brahman as the sole Reality and the material as well as the instrumental cause of the manifestative evolution of cosmos with its name and form is the foundation of his logic that all creation, which is just another name of the revelation

of 'substance' as 'name' and 'form', is a self-creation (*ātmasṛṣṭi*) meaning thereby that Brahman creates out of His own Self without any external means and assistance and the cosmos is just a part (*pāda*) of Brahman in another aspect, in the aspect of Becoming, differentiation and name and form. The reason for this manifestation or creation even when Brahman is supposed to be self-satisfied and want-less is not any particular purpose but simply a desire on His part to have a differential realization of His Bliss. When the *Chāndogya śruti* describes the reason of this creation as a deliberation (*īkṣaṇa*) on the part of Brahman — 'I shall become many. I shall be born.'[1] — it intended to convey that Brahman for the realization of His Bliss thought to be differentiated (*bahusyām*) and to create (*prajāyeya*). Creation, therefore, as explained by the author of the *Brahmasūtra*, has no purpose with a desire or want; it is only a sport[2] or *līlā* where attainment of joy or bliss serves to be the only purpose, if there be any purpose at all. As the *Bhāgavata* unambiguously declares, "O Lord! we unnecessarily argue. What can be the reason of the birth of your unborn Self, other than mere Sport?"[3] Just as a king is interested, while on a hunting spree, only in sport and not in eating the meat of the hunted animal, creation is also for the[4] Lord only a matter of sport without any specific purpose. As a matter of fact, all activity on the part of Brahman of which He is a real agent is, for Vallabhites, always a sport or *līlā*. The two important aspects of *sṛṣṭi-līlā* or the sport of Creation are *Rūpa-līlā*[5] and *Nāma-līlā*. When the Lord or Brahman by His Wish contracts or conceals all His powers and then manifests Himself in parts (*aṁśas*) in a definite way, in forms of variety of objects, it is called His *Rūpa-līlā* or the 'Sport of the Form'. Again, because all words denote only Him, the contraction of this denotative power of the words by the Lord and then manifesting them as different words in a definite way is what the Vallabhites term '*Nāma-līlā*' with the result that each object (*padārtha*) is denoted by a particular word. In this way, the whole of creation is a manifestative evolution

Reason of creation is mere sport.

Rūpa-līlā and *Nāma-līlā*.

1. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 2, 3).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on the sūtra '*Lokavattulīlā kaivalyaṁ*' (II, 1, 33).
3. *Śrībhāgavata*, śloka (X, 2, 38).
4. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 1, 33).
5. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 29 with Śrī, K.N. Mishra's commentary (Hindi).

of Name and Form indicated by the doctrines of *Rūpa-līlā* and *Nāma-līlā*.

Vallabhite solution of the problem of evil.

The next problem of seeking a justification for God's creation of a morally depraved and Evil World, from the Vallabhite standpoint, is really a psuedo-problem created by man's own partial and ignorant consciousness and vision in which he, in the height of his egoism, considers this partial vision as the standard for judging God's activity without stepping into the intuitive vision of God's whole and all-pervasiye consciousness and knowledge. The charge of partiality and cruelty, involving the production of an Evil World, may be comprehensible and justifiable in such systems of philosophy that conceive of an extra-cosmic Personal God; however, much of its sharpness is blunted as soon as God is taken to be the sole Reality and the Creation — involving the Good and the Evil — only His own where everything is God Himself. From the standpoint of the theory of *Ātmasṛṣṭi*, as advocated by Vallabha, all cruelty, appearing in the world, is a matter of self-infliction and not of causing it to someone else for there is none but God.

Reply to the charge of partiality and cruelty.

Yet, it may be argued that the problem of cruelty and evil remains, though for God only and not for others. To this the Vallabhites would be prone to reply that this is only a false issue because 'it applies the terms of a partial statement as if they were applicable to the whole';[1] they necessarily involve a dualistic conception of things. We, in the height of our egoism, have the chicanery to raise a standard— the ethical standard of the Good and the Evil-related only to human— consciousness to a height and state where it is allowed to sit in judgement over the supra-ethical Divine Consciousness whose sole purpose, in the Becoming, is the realization of the universal, illimitable Delight. As observed by Śrī Aurobindo in the course of the explanation of this problem, "When delight of being seeks to realise itself as delight of becoming, it moves in the movement of force and itself takes different forms of movement of which pleasure and pain are positive and negative currents... Its first phenomena are dual and impure, move between the poles of pleasure and pain, but it aims at its self-revelation in the purity of a supreme delight of being which

1. Śrī Aurobindo : *Life Divine*, p. 90.

is self-existent and independent of objects and causes."[1] The moral argument, thus, being inapplicable to an utterly supra-ethical situation, the charge of 'partiality and cruelty' is redundant.

While commenting on the *sūtras*[2] dealing with this problem, Vallabha argues, on the lines of *Vyāsa*, that the charge of partiality and cruelty is irrelevant because the dispensation of pleasure and pain to the individual soul is always relative to its actions (*karmas*) whose flux is almost eternal and beginningless. God in such a dispensation is always a common-cause[3] (*sādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*) and not an uncommon-cause (*asādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*) so as to be worthy of this charge. God, as Vallabha argues, 'is like rain, whereas, *karma* is like the seed'.[4] Yet, he reminds that this argument is employed only for the satisfaction of the opponent because in the philosophy of *Ātmasṛṣṭi*, which is a basic Vallabhite doctrine, there is no reason for any impartiality or cruelty at all. Because Brahman in His celestial and transcendental status is absolutely free from any possibility of defect, it would be preposterous to conceive in Him any such defect as 'partiality and cruelty' on the ground of His non-observance of modes of moral-consciousness. Thus, the Vallabhites refute the opponent's argument that the philosophy of a real creation is unmaintainable on the ground of the presence of Evil and the impossibility of the event of a real Becoming in an Immutable Reality. Creation, therefore, is not unreal or chimerical but is as real as the Reality Itself.

(b) *The Process of Creation*

Two processes described in Upaniṣads.

Vallabha, in his *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa* of *Tattvadīpanibandha*, refers to some six different processes of creation mentioned in the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas and such other scriptures as the *Pāñcarātra-Āgamas*. Out of these the Vedic account of the creative process is generally classifiable under two broad heads,[5] viz., (1) the Direct or the Spontaneous Creation (*sākṣāt*) and (2) the Indirect or the Successive Creation (*paramparyā*). In the case of the former kind,

1. *Ibid*, p. 93.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 1, 34 to 35).
3. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 602.
4. *Ibid*.
5. Dvividhā hi vedānte sṛṣṭiḥ. Bhūtabhautikaṁ sarvabrahmaṇaḥ eva visphulinganyāyena ekā. Aparāviyadādikrameṇa. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 678).

the whole world-order, with its name and form, its elements and physical objects, is spontaneously manifested without involving the intervention of intermediary stages in which the prior stage serves as the cause of the posterior one. The descriptions of world-creation in the *Munḍakopaniṣad* as, "As from a fire, fully ablaze, fly off sparks, in their thousands, that are akin to the fire, similarly, O, good looking one! from the Immutable originate different kinds of creatures and into It again they merge",[1] and the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* as, "He created these worlds, viz., *ambhas*, *marīcī*, *mara āpaḥ*."[2] are the examples of the spontaneous or the direct variety of creation. The narration of creation in the Puruṣavidha-Brāhmaṇa of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* : "The Self was indeed Brahman in the beginning. It knew only Itself as 'I am Brahman'. Therefore It became all. And whosoever amc ng the gods knew It also became That; and the same with sages and nen."[3] : is also a specimen of the spontaneous form of creation.

We have, however, a different account of the process of creation-the successive form — in such Upaniṣads as the *Chāndogya* and the *Taittirīya*. In the *Chāndogya*, there is a description of the creation of fire (*tejas*), from being[4] (*sat*), water (*apas*) from fire and food (*annaṁ*) from water. In the *Taittirīya*, however, the process of creation of elements is described in five stages. This Upaniṣad describes : "From that Brahman, which is the Self, was produced space. From space emerged air. From air was born fire. From fire was created water. From water sprang up earth."[5] Notwithstanding this minor difference between the creative processes of the *Chāndogya* and the *Taittirīya*, they exhibit an identical approach in their account by laying down that the creation in these cases is successive, i.e., in stages, where the former stage is the cause of the origination of the latter one; the space is the cause of air, air of water and so on.

Creative process in Purāṇas and Pāñcarātra Āgamas.

The *Purāṇas*, specially the *Bhāgavata*, describe the first descent (*avatāra*) of the Ultimate and Transcendental Reality, the Nirguṇa Brahman, i.e., Its expression or manifestation as Puruṣa (*puruṣāva-*

1. *Munḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 1, 1)
2. *Aitareyopaniṣad* mantra (1, 1, 2). The whole of Part I of Chapter I, is a description of Spontaneous Creation.
3. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 2, 1 to 4)
4. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (I, 4, 10).
5. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (2, 1, 1).

tāra), as instrumental in the successive creation of *prapañca* or the world-order. The *Pāñcarātra Āgamas*, however, tell a different story when they describe the process of Pure Creation in a four-fold stage — the Vāsudeva, then the Saṁkarṣaṇa, then the Pradyumna and lastly the Aniruddha. However, both these accounts take resort to the conception of successive or *pāramparika* creation. Though the manifestation of the individual souls and *antaryāmins* is universally recognised as a direct and spontaneous sparking off from the Immutable One or the Akṣara Brahman yet we have two different accounts. When the scriptures emphasise that Brahman creates the world, the individual souls and the *antaryāmins* they are conceived to be affected by the concealment of their blissful aspect in their respective degrees. However, when they describe that Brahman Itself becomes the world they do not contemplate any concealment of their blissful aspect. Thus the *śrutis* and the scriptures p esent a plethora of sometimes divergent accounts of the process of world-creation appearing often not only incongruent but contradictory also. To Vallabha, however, this presents no problem because ultimately they all establish that Brahman is the ultimate, material as well as the instrumental cause. The main purpose and the function of the scriptural texts on creation is to inculcate, in our human hearts, the majesty, the inscrutable power and capacity of God through His mighty and stupendous world-creation even though all this is mere sport and effortless activity on the part of God, just as the *arthavādas* and *karmakāṇḍa* are instruments for motivating those who are lethargic by eulogising injunctions (*vidhi*) and denouncing that which is prohibited (*niṣedha*). Moreover, the lack of apparent uniformity in scriptural texts, according to Vallabha, may be traced to several reasons. Though the seers had a full grasp of the Lord's creative process, not only for this aeon but for various others of the past, yet while explaining them to their students and the enquirers they had to be guided by the circumstance of their mental abilities and the specific questions and problems asked by them. At times the seer's own sense of importance contributed to the difference as illustrated by the theories of triple-creation of the *Chāndogya* and the five-fold-creation of elements in the *Taittirīya*. As explained by Vallabha, the elements of *ākāśa* (space) and *vāyu* (air) of the *Taittirīya* are already included in the *sat* of the *Chāndogya*-process. Again, the different descriptions of the processes

Reasons for the different accounts in the Scriptural texts.

do not refer to the present particular creation alone but to many of the past creations also where, as per God's wish, a different process was adopted for cosmic-manifestation, sometimes direct and sometimes indirect or successive. Moreover, in this particular creation of our world both spontaneous and successive processes are adopted; spontaneous in the case of the manifestation of the individual souls (*jīvas*) and *antaryāmins* and successive in the case of Matter, elements, etc. Thus Vallabha is specifically assertive that the contradictory appearance of the scriptural accounts of the process of creation should not lead to the conclusion either that they are mere *arthavādas* or that the creation itself is false (*mithyā*).

Vallabha-Spontaneous creation of jīvas and *antaryāmins* and successive creation of Matter.

In the Śuddhādvaita system of Vallabha and his followers, a definite and detailed account of the process of creation is available in the important works of Śrī Puruṣottamajī Mahārāja such as *Prasthānaratnākara*,[1] *Sṛṣṭibhedavāda*[2] and *Prakāśa*[3] on *Aṇubhāṣya*. We provide a summary of these accounts as this will enable the readers to have a full understanding of the doctrine and the process of creation as contemplated in Vallabhite philosophy.

As revealed in such *śrutis* as : "In the beginning this was Being alone, One only without a second,"[4] "That (Being) saw 'I shall become many, I shall be born' "[5] : there was prior to creation only One, Formless, *Saccidānanda* Brahman whose Wish caused Its partial differentiation into high and low and other innumerable forms. As Brahman is a repository of infinite potentialites, It manifested Itself simultaneously as attributive knowledge and Bliss, as Desire (*icchā*), as *Kāla, Kriyā* (activity), *Māyā* and *Prakṛti*. During the course of Its expression from Its *Saccidānanda* status into the form of attribute, Brahman is manifested into the attributes of Bliss, Knowledge and Existence representing the successive and graded states of the Bhūman or the Puruṣottama, the Akṣara and the Kṣara (the Mutable). This manifestation and differentiation of Brahman in the form of attributes

The process of creation as explained by Puruṣottama.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 55.
2. *Sṛṣṭibhedavāda*, p. 115.
3. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 4, 22).
4. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VI, 2, 2).
5. *Ibid*, mantra (VI, 2, 3).

also differentiates It as 'substance'; Brahman thus acquires a Formful state (*sākāratā*) represented in texts as possessing hands, feet, etc. Subsisting in these states, the Brahman again expresses Itself in the three forms of power (*śakti*); the expressed power of the Being or Existence aspect (*sat*) is called Force or *Kriyā*, that of the Consciousness is known as *Vyāmohikā Māyā* and that of the Bliss (*ānanda*) is termed as *Māyā*, functioning as the world-cause. Subsequent to this, due to the separation of Force (*kriyā-śakti*), the Existence aspect of Brahman, as a partial aspect, becomes the *Avyakta* or the *Prakṛti*. Similarly, the separation of the Knowledge-attribute from the *cidaṁśa* or Consciousness, consequent upon its association with the Ananda-aspect of the Lord-because Bliss as attribute drags both Knowledge and Force-manifests itself in the form of the Universal or Collective Spirit or the *Mukhyajīva*. Then this Primary Soul is infatuated by *Vyāmohikā Māyā*. Even though Brahman in this particular status is not bereft of consciousness, yet, in the absence of knowledge as attribute, it is infatuated. Because in this state it is devoid of bliss, it gets associated with *māyā* in the hope of acquiring bliss through it. In this state of travail, it is associated with the Sūtrātman — of the ten vital breaths (*prāṇas*) — and then ultimately gets expressed in the form of the infinite number of individual souls (jīvas). Even then, in this manifested state of jīva-hood, Brahman retains its consciousness though Its bliss remains almost concealed. The manifestation or the evolution of the world of Matter, however, takes place from the Existence aspect of the *Saccidānanda* through any of the various processes discussed by us.

Puruṣottama, in his *Prasthānaratnākara*[1], recognises the following two kinds of 'creation' :

(c) *Kinds of Creation*

(1) *Nāma-sṛṣṭi* (Creation of Name) : In this kind of Creation, the Lord, as Sūtrātman, expresses Himself, through the *Suṣumnā*, as *Śabda Brahman* or Word. Subsequently, the Śabda-Brahman evolves into sounds, letters, term and sentence.

(2) *Rūpa-sṛṣṭi* (Formal Creation) : Brahman in its five aspects is the cause of formal-creation. These five aspects, which are non-different from Brahman, are, in accordance with the dictates of

Definition and kinds of formal creation.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 56.

the *Bhāgavata* [1] (1) Dravya, (2) Kāla, (3) Karma, (4) Svbhāva and (5) Jīva. Here Dravya stands for *māyā* which is, as we have seen, the cause of the entire world-order; the descriptions of Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva are undertaken in the following pages.

Saguṇa aspect of Brahman

In the Śuddhādvaita system, Brahman which is both transcendental [2] (*nirguṇa*) and phenomenal (*saguṇa*) is the only *prameya* or the object of enquiry and knowledge. The manifested creation inclusive of its activity (*kriyā*) and such six *vikāras* or modifications as origination (*utpatti*), continuance (*sthiti*), development (*vṛddhi*), modification (*vipariṇāma*), decay (*kṣaya*) and destruction [3] (*nāśa*) is the *saguṇa* aspect of Brahman as it necessarily involves the manifestation and the operation of the three *guṇas*, viz., the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. For the easy and proper comprehension of this *prameya* (Brahman) inclusive of its phenomenal aspect, Vallabha and his followers, classify the various expressions or manifestations of Brahman in three orders, viz.,

Three aspects of Brahman's deployment.

(1) Svarūpa, (2) Kāraṇa and (3) Kārya which, in themselves, include the whole of the cosmic-manifestation. The nature and the details of these graded states are as follows :

(D) BRAHMAN'S COSMIC DEPLOYMENT

(a) *Svarūpa-Koṭi*

Definition.

In this particular category are included all those statuses of Brahman that are related [4] to Its being and existence as Activity (*kriyā*), Knowledge (*jñāna*) and both Activity and Knowledge. The first is the aspect of Brahman representing Vedic sacrifices or Yajña, right up from the commencement of the initial sacrificial action to the final consummation and achievement or the end as observed in the mantra, 'Yajño vai viṣṇuḥ'. The second aspect related to Knowledge is the nature of Brahman as preached in the Knowledge-section (*Jñānakāṇḍa*) of the Vedas where It is declared to be Infinite Existence, Consciousness

Aspect as Vedic Sacrifice and Knowledge.

1. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (II, 5, 14).
2. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās (84 to 85) with *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
3. *Āvaraṇabhaṅga* on kārikā 84.
4. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās (90 to 93) with *Prakāśa* and *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.

and Bliss with infinite attributes and powers; this also includes the status of Brahman as Immutable. The third aspect of svarūpa-category comprising both Activity and Knowledge is the ultimate nature of Brahman as Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa, who, being *sākāra Saccidānanda* and full of infinite transcendent and divine attributes, is attainable by Supreme Bhakti (Devotion) alone. Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottama is qualified by both Knowledge and Activity for it is He who is manifested in the forms of Vedic Sacrifices and Brahman-knowledge and is the main subject of instruction in such scriptures as the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata*.

As Brahman, the Puruṣottama, is capable of expression into such aspects and statuses as His Sacrificial Form and the Immutable One (*Akṣara*), the objects of the *Pūrvakāṇḍa* and the *Uttarakāṇḍa* of the Vedas, He motivated by His desire to provide knowledge and to emancipate the individual souls expresses, symbolically, from His feet the Akṣara-Brahman—termed differently in the [1] scriptures as the Brahman Immutable (*Kūṭastha*), the Unmanifested (*Avyakta*), the *Asat* and the *Tama*— which again is manifested into three aspects, viz., Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva. As we have already discussed the nature of Akṣara Brahman, in detail, in the previous chapter of this book, we propose to discuss here the nature and the characteristics of Its manifestations as Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva [2] as explained in the major works of Vāllabha Vedānta.

Definition and nature of *Kāla*.

(1) *Kāla* : Kāla in the *Bhāgavata* and Śuddhādvaita system is a technical term used to indicate the manifested aspect of Puruṣottama's Force or Power of Activity representing His will to create. It is due to its *ceṣṭā* or motivation [3] that the Kāla serves as the instrumental cause of the world-creation; in other words, it is a necessary instrumental cause of all Becoming including the modifications and transformations of the Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*). As the motivation or *ceṣṭā* is the very nature of Kāla, it is the cause of the manifestation of Karma or Action.

1. *Ibid*, kārikā 101 with *Prakāśa*.
2. Etasyaiva rūpāntaraṁ kālakarmasvabhāvāḥ. (*Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 57).
3. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (X, 3, 26) with *Subodhinī*.

Forces of manifestation.

In this particular manifestation, Puruṣottama wilfully conceals His two attributes, namely, Consciousness [1] and Bliss and reveals only a fragment of His Existential aspect (*sat*). It is due to this partial manifestation of only Existence [2] that Kāla is different from Matter in which Existence is fully expressed and is capable of creating the notions of time of different magnitudes, such as moment, hour, month, year etc. Though in Kāla there is no external manifestation of consciousness and bliss, it would be wrong to suppose that it is without them; within [3] the outer kernel of Kāla these two attributes always subsist and notwithstanding their concealment to the worldly senses of men their presence is very well realized by the seers or the knowers of Truth (the *jñānis*). Kāla, thus, is the capacity of Kṛṣṇa and all transformations in world are caused by this power. Just as a King transfers his power to his Minister, Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa, in this case, has transferred His power to Kāla, which virtually is the superintendent [4] of all becoming in the universe. It is not only the cause of creation alone but is also the cause of world-dissolution, involving inverse activity, rendering itself almost a figure of Death.

Function of *Kāla*.

Though Kāla, in itself, is undifferentiated, beginningless and infinite, its most important function, according to the *Bhāgavata* and Vāllabha philosophy, is its instrumentality in effecting a disturbance in the otherwise undisturbed [5] equilibrium of three guṇas, viz., *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. Through this disturbance the Kāla both differentiates the *guṇas* and creates a state of preponderance by affecting their intermixture. Kāla being eternal and ubiquitous, universally permeates all things and their movements and is the universal condition of all existence. [6] Its movement is so subtle that it goes unobserved by the ordinary senses of worldly creatures; yet, it is the cause of all creation and destruction in the universe happening almost every moment.

1. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 106 with *Prakāśa* and *Āvaraṇa-bhaṅga*.
2. The reason being that *Kriyā* is the power of Existence.
3. *Ibid*, kārikā, 107 with *Prakāśa* and *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
4. *Ibid*, kārikā 110.
5. *Subodhinī* on *Bhāgavata*, śloka (III, 10, 11); *Bhāgavata* ślokas (II, 5, 20 to 22)
6. Kriyāśaktipradhānatvāt nityagaḥ sakalāśrayaḥ.
   (T.D.N., *Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*. kārikā, 107).

Forms of *Kāla*'s manifestation.

According to Vallabha, Kāla, like other divine manifestations, also has three forms,[1] viz., the elemental (*ādhibhautika*), the spiritual (*ādhyātmika*) and the divine (*ādhidaivika*). The sun, the planets and all other stars are Its elemental forms whereas the Lord Himself is Its divine or the *ādhidaivika* form. The spiritual or the *ādhyātmika* form of Kāla is constituted by atomic-time (*paramāṇu-kāla*) which, according to Vallabhism, is the time taken by the sun's rays in penetrating an atom. As an atom is further indivisible, the atomic-time too is indivisible and is the smallest division of time; it is through the unification of these *paramāṇu-kālas* that the other higher divisions of time are brought about.

Definition and nature of *Karma*.

(2) *Karma* : Karma (action) is defined as that[2] all-pervasive activity (*kriyā*) which is capable of being manifested at a particular space (and time) through mundane performance of injunctions (*vidhi*) and prohibitions (*niṣedha*). Like Kāla, Karma is also a special manifestation or evolute of the[3] Immutable Brahman (*Akṣara-Brahman*) with the only difference that while Kāla is a direct and spontaneous revelation from the Akṣara, the expression of Karma is always only through the individual soul (*puruṣa*). Due to this particular characteristic, the manifestation of Karma is always temporal and non-eternal unlike Kāla whose expression is always eternal. It lasts only as long as the individual soul has not achieved its desired end; it vanishes as soon as the desired end is realised.

One single *Karma* having diverse manifestations.

Vallabhite philosophy conceives of one single all-pervasive Karma as the ultimate motivating force at the back of all human activity. All the various forms of human actions, both good and evil, are the manifestations[4] of this unitary Karma caused by such *upādhis* or conditions as injunctive or prohibitive performance with particular ends in view like the *Jyotiṣṭoma* and *Putreṣṭi Yajñas*. These

1. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās (110 & 111) with *Prakāśa*. See also *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 57.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 57.
3. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās 111. Also *Tattvadīpaprakāśa*, p. 164.
4. *Ibid*, kārikās 112 & 113.

mundane and transient forms of action are only gross expressions of the ubiquitous unitary force or Karma which is always dependent on Kāla for its manifestation. The expression and operation of Karma is necessarily simultaneous with the manifestation of Kāla so much as that if there is no Time there can no Action. Like Kāla, in Karma (Action) also there is a concealment [1] of the two attributes of Consciousness and Bliss.

(3) *Svabhāva* : Svabhāva is the special nature of things by which they undergo modifications [2] in a particular manner, Why milk is transformed into curd and not into oil? Why mud is transformed into a jar and not into cloth? Why a peacock is multi-coloured and why is a swan always white? The reason for all this, as the Vallabhites explain, is [3] the Svabhāva which is just an aspect and an expression of Lord's Wish; in other words, it is the Lord's Wish that things should be so, and so they are. As the manifestation of 'svabhāva' is not caused [4] by Brahman's *saccidānanda* aspect it has in its nature a total concealment of all the three attributes of Brahman, viz., Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

Definition and nature of *Svabhāva*.

Just as Kāla and Karma are indispensable for all mundane activity and behaviour, Svabhāva is the base and the fundamental condition [5] of all conscient and inconscient existents both collectively and individually. It is the special quality of Svabhāva that it completely permeates an existent, is always first in appearance at the time of the existent's manifestation and lasts as long as the thing subsists and then is drowned into concealment. The Vallabhites, thus, conceive of Svabhāva as a universal and fundamental condition of all existents having its reason in the Wish of the Lord.

Svabhāva as the universal and fundamental condition.

1. Asyāpi cidānandāditirobhāvādiḥ kālavadeva. (*Tattvadīpaprakāśa* on kārikā 114).
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 58.
3. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 115 with *Tattvadīpaprakāśa* and *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
4. Bhagavadicchārūpeṇa prakaṭo bhavati na saccidānandarūpeṇa. (*Tattvadīpaprakāśa* on kārikā 115).
5. *Ibid*, kārikā 115.

(b) *Kāraṇa-Koṭi*

Causal-category consists of 28 *tattvas*.

Within this category are included the twenty eight *tattvas* that are the manifestations of the *Sat* or the Existence aspect of Brahman. Because they represent and manifest the Being or the Existence of the Immutable Truth they are called *tattvas* and because their manifestations precede the evolution of the cosmic egg, whose material causality can be traced to them, they are termed 'causes' and are included within the causal-category (*kāraṇa-koṭi*). *Kāraṇatva* (being the cause), as explained by Puruṣottama, means being the substrate of the power of the manifestation of the cosmic egg. It is, thus, the uncommon-cause of this manifestation and not a common-cause (*sādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*) like the Lord's Wish. These twenty eight causes, as enumerated by the Vallabhites [1], are Prakṛti, Puruṣa, Mahat, Ahaṁkāra, rūpa, rasa, gandha, sparśa, śabda, netra (eyes), Jihvā (tongue), Nāsikā (nose), tvaccā (skin), karṇa (ears), manas, vāṇī (speech), hasta (hands), caraṇa (feet), upastha (genital organ) gudā (anus), pṛthvī (earth), jala (water), tejas (fire), vāyu (air), ākāśa (ether), sattvaguṇa, rajoguṇa and tamoguṇa. In this enumeration, number (*saṁkhyā*), measure (parimāṇa), paratva, aparatva and universal (jāti) are not counted separately, as in Nyāya, but are included within the twenty eight *tattvas* themselves.

Definition of *tattva*.

28 causes enumerated.

(1) *Puruṣa (Individual soul)* : The Akṣara Brahman is first of all manifested into *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. *Puruṣa*, according to Puruṣottama, [2] is a synonym of the term 'Ātman' which means a principle pervading all objects or serving as their substratum. The *Puruṣa* or Ātman has three aspects or definitions as mentioned below :

Puruṣa — its nature.

(i) *The Phenomenal Aspect* : In this aspect the Ātman is beginningless, *nirguṇa* (transcending the attributes of *Prakṛti*) and is the controller of Primordial Matter (*Prakṛti*); yet it is the object of 'ego-consciousness' or the sense of the 'I'.

1. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās 86 and 87.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 59.

(ii) *The Real Aspect* (the *svarūpa* definition) : In this aspect which describes the real nature of Ātman, the *Puruṣa* is contemplated to be Self-illuminating (*svayaṁprakāśa*).

(iii) *The Liberational Aspect* : In this aspect the Ātman, nothwithstanding its natural freedom from any kind of contact with good and evil qualities of world, is related to all the objects of world. This is a state which the Ātman acquires during its liberation.

Though the real nature of the *Puruṣa* or Ātman is transcendent, *nirguṇa* and isolated from the influence of *Prakṛti* and its evolutes like body, senses, vital breath, *manas* etc., yet, on account of the Lord's Wish to create, a sense of agency and activity and involvement with the attributes of *Prakṛti* is introduced in it through the absence of discrimination between *Prakṛti* and itself just as the reflection of the sun in a red-mirror causes an appearance of a red-sun. Any attribution of *saguṇatva* to the real nature of the Self would, in Puruṣottama's view, imply the reality of bondage and the consequent futility of all scriptural instructions; *saguṇatva*, therefore, is only adventitious and not a natural property of the *Puruṣa*.

Saguṇatva an adventitious property.

The Vallabhites are the ardent supporters of the view, unlike the pluralism of Sāṁkhya, that the *Puruṣa* is only one. As contended by Vallabha, "There is not even an iota of difference between the jīva and Īśvara; any conception other than this is unfounded."[1] As expounded by the Lord in Canto XI of the *Bhāgavata*, the jīva and the Īśvara are different, not in essence and by nature, but only by their specific status (*avasthā*) and, therefore, the nature and definition of *Puruṣa* is also the nature and definition of the jīva, the difference in their manifestations is, however, caused by the two *Prakṛtis*, the *vyāmohikā* and the original-prakṛti (*mūla-prakṛti*); the *vyāmohikā* subjects the jīva to bondage, whereas, through the *mūla-prakṛti*, the Lord, subsisting in His own nature creates the world. The individual soul is only an aspect or *aṁśa* of Brahman involving the manifestation of Its *Sat* and *Cit* attributes and the concealment of Its Bliss. As the philosophy of the individual soul has already been discussed, in detail, in our chapter, 'The

Unity of *Puruṣa*.

1. *Subodhinī* on Canto III; *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 60.

Philosophy of the Individual Soul', we pass on to the consideration of the second *tattva*, the *Prakṛti*.

Nature, function and properties of *Prakṛti*.

(2) *Prakṛti* : *Prakṛti* or *Pradhāna* is evolved by Brahman to serve as the material cause of world-creation. The *Prakṛti*, according to Puruṣottama, possesses six properties representing the six qualities handed down to it by Brahman. These properties are :

(i) *Triguṇāni* (Consisting of the three-guṇas) : The *Prakṛti* is a state of equilibrium [1] of the three *guṇas*, namely, the *sattva*, the *rajas* and the *tamas*. Just as Saccidānanda Brahman evolves into Existence, Consciousness and Bliss as attributes, the *Prakṛti* can also become the attributes of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* from a part (*aṁśa*) of itself. Therefore the conception of *Prakṛti* as contemplated in Vallabhism in one of substance consisting of attributes as against the Sāṁkhya doctrine of *Prakṛti* merely as a homogeneous equilibrium of *guṇas*. These three *guṇas* of *Prakṛti* are only the perverted and degraded manifestations of the three attributes of Brahman viz., the *sat,* the *cit* and the *ānanda* and, as such, subsist in Brahman's manifested power or *māya*.

(ii) *Avyakta (Unmanifested)* : The second property of *Prakṛti* is its unmanifested nature. As it is never expressed at any point of time, past, present or future, it is called *Avyakta* or the unmanifested.

(iii) *Nityaṁ (Eternal)* : As the *Prakṛti* is Unmanifested, it is necessarily eternal also because any idea of its non-eternality would imply the cessation of world-creation. It is, therefore, eternal and subsists primarily in Brahman's Existence-aspect. As the evolution of *Prakṛti*, in the process of creation, is simultaneous with the evolution of Time, etc., there is no harm in denying to it the objectivity to negation in terms of the three forms of time meaning thereby that it is eternal.

(iv) *Sadasadātmakaṁ* : The *Prakṛti* is both *sat* and *asat*, i.e., it is both the cause (*kāraṇa*) and the effect subsisting in a relation of identity.

(v) *Aviśeṣaṁ* (Undifferentiated) : Because the *Prakṛti* is a state of the equilibrium of the *guṇas* there is no manifestation of difference. It is, therefore, in this particular aspect undifferentiated.

1. Yattattriguṇaṁ avyaktaṁ nityaṁ sadasadātmakaṁ,
Pradhānaṁ prakṛtiṁ prāhuraviśeṣaṁ viśeṣavat. (*Bhāgavata*, śloka III, 26, 10).

(vi) *Viśeṣavat* (Differentiated) : After the manifestation of its effect - *mahat* etc. - the *Prakṛti* gets differentiated. So it is the substrate of differentiation and difference. As Brahman is the repository of contradictory attributes so *Prakṛti* also, acquiring this greatness and capacity from It, can be both differentiated and undifferentiated simultaneously.

Relation between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*.

The relation between the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, as conceived by the Vallabhites, is the one that subsists between the master and the servant as conceived in other systems of philosophy. Besides, the Vallabhites, on the authority of the scriptural texts suggesting the impregnation of the *Prakṛti* by *Puruṣa*, also maintain that the relation of contact (*saṁyoga*) too is possible between them. The Vallabhites also emphasize that because Brahman is *sākāra*, both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* are also *sākāra*, i.e., Formal.

Aprākṛtaguṇas – their origin.

(3) to (5) *The Guṇas* : *Guṇas* or attributes, as in Sāṁkhya and other systems, are three in number, viz., *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. Unlike Sāṁkhya, the Vallabhites recognise that these *guṇas* have two forms, namely, the *Prākṛta* or Natural and the *Aprākṛta* or the Supernatural. Whereas in their *Aprākṛta* or pure state these three *guṇas* have their appearance direct [1] from Brahman through the instrumentality of *Māyā*, the manifestation of the *Prākṛta* or Natural *guṇas* occurs at a later stage when the *Prakṛti* (the Primordial Matter) has already evolved. As the Vallabhites contend, it is the *pure-sattva* which forms the body of the different Descents or Avatāras of Brahman and is responsible for the concealment of Bliss in Brahman's Immutable State (*Akṣara*). The *pure-sattva* originates from Brahman's attribute of *Sat* [2] (Existence), whereas, the *pure-rajas* and *pure-tamas* evolve out of Its Consciousness-attribute and Bliss-attribute respectively. The impure or the *Prākṛta-guṇas* are manifested out of the Pradhāna to serve as causes for the further evolution of *Mahat* and other *tattvas*. As such, it is the *Prākṛta* form of the *guṇas*

Prākṛta-guṇas.

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 58.
2. Nirguṇasya guṇāstraya ityasya subodhinyāṁ sphuṭaṁ. Sadaṁśānnirgataṁ sattvamucyate, cidaṁśādrajaḥ, ānandāṁśācca tama iti.
(*Āvaraṇabhanga* on kārikā 121 of *Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*).

that is included within the causal-category (*kāraṇa-koṭi*). The nature of the three *guṇas* as defined by Puruṣottama are as under :

(i) *Sattva-guṇa* : The attribute of *sattva* [1] is self-luminous and being of the nature of pleasure (*sukha*) is devoid of the capacity of veiling the manifestation of pleasure. Because of this, the *sattva* creates in the individual soul an attachment towards pleasure and knowledge and through these to the body itself.

(ii) *Rajo-guṇa* : This attribute [2] is of the nature of attachment (towards objects). It creates in its subject the feeling of desire and association and a longing for *karma* (activity). On account of this attachment and proneness to activity, this particular *guṇa* creates in the creature an intense attachment and love for his body.

(iii) *Tamo-guṇa* : This attribute [3], which is born out of the power of concealment, is the cause of the infatuation (*moha*) of all creatures. It has its function in creating delusion, laziness and sleep in the individual soul and thereby it creates attachment towards body.

Vallabha's difference from Īśvarakṛṣṇa.

This Vallabhite exposition of the nature of the *Guṇas* and the *Prakṛti* involves a denunciation of Īśvarakṛṣṇa's Sāṁkhya where the *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are conceived as two separate and diametrically opposed principles without any Ground that might establish their mutual relation. As criticised by Vallabha in his *Aṇubhāṣya*, on the suppositions [4] of Classical Sāṁkhya, the Inconscient Primordial Matter can hardly be conceived to initiate the process of transformation or *pariṇāma*, unless it is conceived to be under the superintendence of the ultimate principle of Brahman; the universe is, therefore, not a transformation in the Sāṁkhya-sense but a creation (*racanā*). Moreover, for establishing a relationship between the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, so that the latter might serve the ends of the former, the two have to be conceived as manifestations of another Higher or the Ground Principle, the Brahman, as contemplated in *Brahmavāda*. Thus, though the Vallabhites are against the independently formulated philosophy of the Classical Sāṁkhya based primarily on inference and logic, which

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 58.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 606 to 617.

is just another version [1] of the *svabhāvavāda* or atheistic materialism, they are not averse to the treatment of Theistic Sāṁkhya as undertaken by the *Bhāgavata* where both *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are contemplated as the evolutes or the manifestations of a Single Reality, the Nirguṇa Brahman.

(6) *Mahat* : *Mahat* is the first evolute of the *Prakṛti* produced through the disequilibrium of the three *guṇas* caused by the operation of Kāla, Karma and Svabhāva. On account of the power of Brahman in the form of Kāla, there is an imbalance and disproportion in the *guṇas*; the *Svabhāva* brings a transformation and Karma finally produces the *mahat*. The first stage in this transformation is the *Sūtra* which represents the 'power of activity' (*kriyā-śakti*) and the second happens to be *Mahat* meaning the one that possesses the 'power of knowledge' (*jñānaśakti*). Since both these stages are the steps in the evolution of the single principle called '*Mahat*', the *Mahat*, in Vallabhite philosophy, is contemplated as a principle possessing both the powers of knowledge and activity. Due to the association of the transcendent *Puruṣa* (*paraḥpumān*) and the *Prakṛti*, both Consciousness and Existence, as attributes, are passed on into the *Mahat* (Consciousness from *Puruṣa* and Existence of *Prakṛti*), Thus there evolves the principle of *Mahat* which by nature is exceedingly brilliant and luminous.

The Divine, the Spiritual and the Elemental forms of *Mahat*.

Vallabha, on the basis of the *Bhāgavata*, conceives of the three forms of *Mahat*, the divine (*ādhidaivika*), the spiritual (*ādhyātmika*) and the elemental (*ādhibhautika*). What is called the divine aspect of *Mahat* is the *Mahat* in its universal and essential form; its spiritual form is known to be the body of Brahmā, whereas, the *citta*, of the individual souls is considered to be its elemental form. [2] According to Puruṣottama, however, the particular *śloka* of the *Bhāgavata* which describes the *Mahat* by narrating 'that it being immutable, manifested out of itself the universe; it is the seed of the world and it swiftly drank the darkness (*tamas*)— during dissolution— veiling its nature' [3] is a description of its spiritual (*ādhyātmika*) nature. The three points stressed in this śloka, viz., (1) that it, being immutable, is the ground of future cosmic manifestation. (2) that it is the seed of the world and

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 58.
2. *T.D.N. Saravnirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 124.
3. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (III, 26, 20).

(3) that it devoured the darkness, are the *sāttvika*, the *rājasika* and the *tāmasika* definitions of the spiritual aspect of the *Mahat*. The next śloka [1] of the *Bhāgavata* which describes *Mahat* as the *śuddhasattva* forming the ground of the manifestation of Vāsudeva — for purposes of Upāsanā — is the *ādhidaivika* or the divine form of *Mahat*. The third or the elemental [2] (*ādhibhautika*) form is the *citta* of the individual souls in the form of *vṛttis* that are pure, objectless and peaceful.

Origin and nature of *Ahaṁkāra*.

(7) *Ahaṁkāra* : *Ahaṁkāra* is the second evolute of *Prakṛti* originating directly form *Mahat* due to the imbalance caused in the *guṇas* by Kāla and the preponderance of the *rajas* and *tamas*. This particular evolute is significant in possessing the powers of both knowledge and activity — as it produces further evolutes — and has the character of a substance (*dravya*). The nature of the *ahaṁkāra* [3] which is the cause of the succeeding evolutions of *tanmātras*, the *indriyas* and the *manas* is both *cit* (conscious) and *acit* (unconscious). Though intrinsically it is unconscious, the reflection of *cit* in its body makes it both conscious and unconscious. Like *Mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* is also classified in the following three categories [4] :

Classification of *Ahaṁkāra*.

(i) *Ādhyātmika* : The general definition of this variety of *ahaṁkāra* is that it is the cause of the production of *tanmātras*, *indriyas* and *manas* and it possesses the attributes of *tamas* etc., This form of *ahaṁkāra* is again of the following three kinds :

(a) *Sāttvika* : This *sāttvika* variety, which is also called *Vaikārika-ahaṁkāra*, has the preponderance of the *sattva*-attribute. It is this aspect of '*ahaṁkāra*' which produces the manas, and the eleven gods of the different directions, the sun, the moon, the Vāyu etc.

(b) *Rājasika* : The *Rājasika-ahaṁkāra* has the preponderance of the rajas-attribute. It is the cause of the production of the indriyas (sense-organs).

(c) *Tāmasika* : This form of *ahaṁkāra* has the preponderance of *tamas* : it creates the *tanmātras*.

(ii) *Ādhidaivika* : The *ādhidaivika* form of *ahaṁkāra* is the

1. *Ibid*, śloka (III, 26, 21).
2. *Ibid*, śloka (III, 26, 22).
3. *Ibid*, śloka (III, 26, 23 to 31).
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 64

ground or the substrate of the particular *vyūha* of the Lord called Saṁkarṣaṇa.

(iii) *Ādhibhautika* : Within the *ādhibhautika* (elemental) aspect of *ahaṁkāra* are included its triple functioning as the subject (*kartṛ*), the instrument (*karaṇa*) and the object (*kārya*). Due to the preponderance of *sattva* this aspect of *ahaṁkāra* creates in the creature the notion of 'I'; on account of the preponderance of *rajas* it takes the form of senses (*indriyas*) whereas the excess of *tamas* leads to the manifestation of the elements (*bhūtas*). *Prāṇa* (the vital breath), which provides strength to the senses through its power of activity, and the intellect that possesses the power of knowledge (*jñānaśakti*) are also the transformations of this aspect of *ahaṁkāra*.

(8) *Tanmātras* : The subtlest indeterminate forms [1] of the elements (*bhūtas*) are known as *tanmātras*; they are created out of the *tāmas-ahaṁkāra*, their material-cause, and in turn produce the other *tattvas*. As the elements are five in number, the *tanmātras* are also five, viz., *śabda* (sound), *sparśa* (touch), *rūpa* (colour), *rasa* (taste) and *gandha* (smell). On account of their subtlety these *tanmātras* are imperceptible to our ordinary senses; however, they become objects of the *yogins'* perceptions who alone are capable of cognising them. The mundane human intellect can acquire a valid knowledge about these indeterminate existents only through inference; it is only their determinate manifestations that are cognised by human intellect.

Nature and kinds of *Tanmātras*.

(a) *Śabda* or *Ākāśa* : To be the object of an auditory cognition is the differentia [2] of *śabda* or sound. Sound is indicative of both the cogniser and the cognised just as the word 'elephant' heard from a man sitting outside the house provides knowledge about both the man (the cogniser) and the elephant (the cognised). The *śabda* which comes under the formal-creation (*nāmasṛṣṭi*) is differentiated as soon as it is transformed into an effect and then it serves as a *guṇa* (quality) of the five elements. Though the Vallabhites recognise the attributive character of 'sound' they disagree with the Naiyāyikas who emphasise that *śabda* is a quality only of *ākāśa* (ether); to them, sound is also the quality of other

Nature of *Śabda*.

Difference from Nyāya standpoint.

1. *Ibid*, p. 64.
2. *Ibid*.

elements, e.g., the earth-element (*pṛthvī*). When sound is generated by the beating of a drum it serves as an attribute of the earth-element because the drum is constituted of earth. Moreover, as the Vallabhites assert, sound is capable of tactual-contact also; as explained by them, the sound of a gun-shot is felt by the human skin which shows that it is capable of the tactual-contact.

Though *Śabda* as an aspect of Veda is eternal, as already discussed in the chapter, 'The Theory of Knowledge', yet it acquires a non-eternal character in mundane existence on account of manifestation and concealment and becomes sometimes audible and sometimes inaudible to different sets of people. The generation of 'sound' in physical world is assisted by 'air' which serves as the instrumental cause in its movement. It is a peculiarity of 'sound' that all the five elements can function as its inherent cause; yet ether (*ākāśa*) is generally and specifically accepted by the Vallabhites as the inherent-cause of *śabda*.

Nature and kinds of *Sparśa*.

(b) *Sparśa* : *Sparśa* (touch) is apprehensible [1] by means of skin (*tvak*). Its substantive aspect is the *vāyu-tanmātra*. As such it is an effect, is determinate in character and is a quality of all the four elements (air, fire, water and earth). In its substantial aspect, as *tanmātra*, it is of four kinds, viz., soft, hard, cold and hot, whereas, in its attributive aspect it has variety of forms such as soft, slippery, hard, cold, hot, lukewarm, light, heavy, contact, etc., Here it may be noted that the consideration of lightness and heaviness as touch-attributes in Vallabhite philosophy is at variance with the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika standpoint that regards them exclusively as measurable and as such different from the attribute of 'touch'. To the Vallabhites, however, such an argument is specious because one can feel the lightness or heaviness of a flower and a fruit on the palm of his hand through 'touch'. Wherever there is the knowledge of the 'light' and the 'heavy' without touch, it is always by means of inference and not perception. The Vallabhites also do not recognise 'contact' as a separate quality like Nyāya : they include it within the touch-attribute.

1. *Ibid*, p. 65 and also
Sukhwal : *The Philosophy of Vallabha*, (Hindi), p. 88.

(c) *Rūpa* : The quality which is cognisable through eye is termed as 'rūpa'.[1] Its substantive aspect is the *tejas-tanmātra*. It acquires the form of the substance in which it subsists and manifests itself in innumerable colour-forms such as brilliant, white, blue, yellow, green, red, etc., It is characterised by brilliance and expansion and pervades places even other than its substrate.

Rūpa.

(d) *Rasa* : *Rasa* is the quality apprehensible through[2] tongue. Its substantive aspect is the *water-tanmātra*. In its substantive aspect as *tanmātra*, it is unmanifested (*avyakta*) and sweet (*madhura*). As an effect it is of seven kinds, viz., *kāṣāya, madhura* (sweet). *tikta* (bitter), *kaṭu* (pungent), *āmla, kṣāra* and mixed; through the intermixture of these, innumerable varieties of tastes are formed. Taste, both as a substance and as an attribute, is pervaded by *rūpa*, colour or form, and on the other hand, pervades *gandha* or smell. In water, however, the attribute of taste is unmanifested and sweet.

Rasa.

(e) *Gandha* : *Gandha* is defined as a quality cognisable only through the olfactory[3] organ (*ghrāṇa*) and its substantive aspect is the *earth-tanmātra*. It is of two kinds, viz., manifested (*vyakta*) and unmanifested (*avyakta*). As an attribute pervading effects, it is broadly classifiable into six different kinds, namely, mixed, foul-smelling, fragrant, peaceful, violent and acid and the inter-mixture of these creates infinite varieties. As a quality, it can pervade places other than those occupied by its substrate.

Gandha.

These five different kinds of *tanmātras* are produced out of *ahaṁkāra*. From *ahaṁkāra* is born the *śabda-tanmātra*, from this *śabda-tanmātra*, containing *ahaṁkāra*, is created the *sparśa-tanmātra* which contains the qualities of both the *śabda* and the *sparśa-tanmātras*. In this way the successive creations of *rūpa*, *rasa* and *gandha tanmātras* take place where each successive *tanmātra* contains all the *guṇas* of its preceding *tanmātras*.

(9) *The Elements* : As defined by Puruṣottama, 'element' (*bhūta*)

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 67.
2. *Ibid*, p. 68.
3. *Ibid.*

Nature and creation of Elements.

is that which possesses[1] the attributes of *śabda*, etc. Alternatively, it may also be defined as that which is one of these five, namely, ether, air, fire, water and earth. These five elements are manifested out of the five-*tanmātras* in the following why. Ether (*ākāśa*) is produced from *śabda-tanmātra* and this is why 'sound' is the special attribute of *ākāśa* or ether. The element of 'air' (*vāyu*) is produced from both the *śabda* and the *sparśa tanmātras* so that both *śabda* (sound) and *sparśa* (touch) are the qualities of 'air'. Similarly, the 'fire-element' (*tejas*) is the product of the combination of the *śabda, sparśa* and *rūpa tanmātras*, having the three qualities of sound, touch and colour. The 'water-element' (*ap*) is constituted of the four *tanmātras*, viz., *śabda, sparśa, rūpa* and *rasa*, whereas, the 'earth-elements' (*pṛthvī*) is produced by all the five *tanmātras*, viz., *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha*. These also possess four, in case of water, and five (in case of earth) qualities respectively of their respective *tanmātras* as in former cases. It is thus apparent that in the process of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) each posterior manifestation of the element is constituted of all the *tanmātras* of its previous manifestations with the addition of its own. Likewise, each posterior evolute combines all the qualities of the previous element with its own special quality.

(a) *Ākāśa (Ether)* : *Ākāśa*, as an element, has three properties and functions; firstly, it provides space within the constitution of the different elements, secondly, it is the basis of the experience of the 'interior' and the 'exterior' and, thirdly, it is the support of the vital breath, the senses and the *antaḥkaraṇa*. These three are respectively called the *ādhidaivika*, the *ādhibhautika* and the *ādhyātmika lakṣaṇas* (characteristics) of *ākāśa*. However, it is the *ādhibhautika* property — i.e., its being the basis of the experience of 'interior' and 'exterior' — that constitutes its essential difference (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*).

Definition and properties of *Ākāśa*.

The element of *ākāśa*, according to Vallabha, is non-elemental because it is a product as laid down in the scriptural text, 'From Ātman came forth the *ākāśa*' and the *Brahmasūtras*.[2] Because the *ākāśa* is an object of

Ākāśa is non-eternal.

1. *Ibid*, p. 69.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtras (2, 3, 6 to 7).

empirical experience it is always subject to change and all that is changeable is an effect [1] or a modification. *Ākāśa*, therefore, according to Vallabha, is always non-eternal unlike the Vaiśeṣika system that tries to establish its eternality. The Vallabhites also disregard the philosophical speculation [2] that seeks to prove *ākāśa* as blue and dark. To them the appearance of *ākāśa* as blue as well as dark is unreal and a product of delusion. *Śabda* is the special attribute of *ākāśa*.

Definition and function of *Vāyu*.

(b) *Vāyu (Air)* : The particular element which being formless causes movement (those of the branches of the trees), assemblage (collection of scattered leaves at one place), transmission of fragrance from its place of origin to the olfactory-sense, the transportation of substances (e.g., jar, cloth, etc.) and strength to the senses (in the form of vital-breath) is known as 'air'. Its special attribute is 'touch'; yet, by relation, the attribute of *śabda* is introduced to it. As such the Vallabhites contend that 'air' possesses two attributes namely, sound and touch. Like *ākāśa*, *vāyu* is also non-eternal. [3]

Nature and function of *Tejas*.

(c) *Tejas (Fire)* : Performance of six functions, [4] viz., illumination (through sun), consummation (digestion of food in the stomach inside the human body and ripening of fruits in external nature), drinking (of water etc. by the stomach-fire), melting of snow, eating (i.e., consumption of food by the stomach-fire) and drying (of clothes etc.) are the differentiating characteristics that provide a general definition of *tejas* as an element. Its special attribute is *rūpa* or colour. As it also acquires the two attributes of its immediate cause, the air, namely sound and touch, it comes to possess three attributes, i.e., *rūpa, sparśa* and *śabda*. Though the element of fire, from the Vallabhite standpoint, is unitary yet it functions in five different ways as explained above (out of the six, drinking and eating, being related to stomach fire, are treated as one).

(d) *Jala (Water)* : The eight functions of water described below constitute the definition of the element of water. The functions are : (1) Wetting (*kledanaṁ*) of clothes etc., (2) making mass of powdered

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 3, 7) with *Prakāśa*.
2. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 69.
3. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (2, 3, 8).
4. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 71.

substance (*pinḍanaṁ*), (3) providing satisfaction (*tripti*), as in the case of a man who (after taking food) — though not fully satisfied — becomes fully satisfied when he drinks water, (4) maintaining life (*prāṇanaṁ*), (5) providing satisfaction to *prāṇa* (vital-breath), (6) motivating movement — as the transportation of goods by water-current, (7) destroying heat and (8) providing abundance (because where water enters, the object increases in measure and weight). The special quality of water is *rasa*. As it also acquires the three attributes of its cause, the *tejas*, water possesses four qualities, viz., *śabda, sparśa, rūpa* and *rasa*.

Definition and function of *Jala*.

(e) *Pṛthvī (Earth)* : Puruṣottama defines '*pṛthvī*' as that which while containing a form is directly the substratum (*āśraya*) of the whole world. Alternatively, it may also be defined 'as that which being the direct ground of the world is different from all other elements'. The Vallabhite conception of 'earth' as the ground of all other elements is rather interesting. What they intend by such a contention is the communication of the fact that without the involvement of 'earth' or its effect no manifestation of any of the four elements is possible; without wood — which is a product of earth — manifestation of fire is impossible; without land, the seas and oceans can never exit Smell or *gandha* is the special attribute of earth, yet it contains all the four other attributes of its cause, the water-element, and thus possesses five attributes, viz., *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha*. Puruṣottama criticises Viśvanātha [2] Pañcānana's contention that 'smell' alone is the attribute of earth and maintains that all the five attributes are acquired by 'earth' though 'smell' happens to be its special quality.

Definition and nature of *Pṛthvī*.

Criticism of *Nyāya*.

With regard to the evolution of the five elements, it is important to mention that the Śuddhādvaita system is an advocate of heterogeneous [3] origination (*vijātīya-ārambhavāda*) as propagated in the *śrutis* as against the doctrine of homogeneous origination (*sajātīya-ārambhavāda*) of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system. The validity of hetero-

Vallabhite theory of heterogeneous origination.

1. *Ibid*, p. 72.
2. *Ibid*, p. 72.
3. *Ibid*, p. 73.

geneous origination is established both on the basis of perception and scriptural testimony. From cow-dung originates a scorpion and form a particular genus different species, such as gods, men, monkeys, bears etc. are born. The Upaniṣad, texts such as 'From ether originates air, from air fire, from fire water, from water originates earth' etc. point to the truth and validity of the theory of heterogeneous origination.

(10) *Indriyas (Senses)* : *Indriya* is defined by Puruṣottama as that which while existing in the body is the instrument of the production of either knowledge or action by which they also reveal the existence of the soul. These senses are of two kinds, viz., the five cognitive senses and five conative senses. The cognitive senses are eye, ear, nose, mouth and skin whereas the conative senses are speech, hands, legs, the genital-organ and the anus. All these *indriyas* are the evolutes of *taijasa* or *rājasa ahaṁkāra* and are meant for utilisation by the individual soul. The main purpose of the creation of these *indriyas* is the fulfilment of the soul's desire. All these sense-organs are atomic, eternal and non-physical (*abhautika*) like the individual soul. It is a special feature of Vallabhite cosmology that it treats the *indriyas* [1] and *prāṇa at par* with the jīvātman on the question of origination. The vital-breath and the senses have a spontaneous manifestation or *vyuccaraṇa*, like the jīva, prior to the evolution of the five elements. The vital-breath and the sense-organs exist [2] prior to physical creation and during the state of the soul's liberation fully merge in Brahman Itself. Thus the vital-breath, the sense-organs and the *manas* — which is just another aspect of speech — do not originate, in essence; [3] they are only manifested simultaneously.

Definition and kinds of *indriyas*.

Origination of *Senses*.

(11) *Manas* : Like other Vaiṣṇavite systems, the Vallabhites regard *manas* as an *indriya* on the authority of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Whereas the other sense-organs, whether cognitive or conative, are instrumental in the production of either knowledge or action, *manas*

Manas an *indriya* — its nature and function.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya,* with *Prakāśa* on sūtra (2, 4, 3).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (2, 4, 3).
3. Svarūpotpatterevātra niṣidhyate jīvavat, na tu udgamaḥ.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 4, 3).

as an *indriya*, while existing in the body, is instrumental in the production of both (*ubhayātmaka*); every event of cognition or conation is always associated with *manas*. Besides providing assistance in cognition and conation, the most important functions of *manas* are determination (*saṁkalpa*) and doubt (*vikalpa*) and the production of desire (*kāma*). As *manas* is the only *indriya* operating in the psychological functioning of 'doubt' and 'determination', this function is regarded as its essential definition; the other function, i.e., the generation of desire is, however, its *kāryalakṣaṇa*. Both these two definitions are, however, the *ādhyātmika* or the spiritual definitions of *manas*. Its *ādhidaivika* aspect is the seat of the manifestation of the particular *vyūha* called *Aniruddha*, whereas, its *ādhibhautika* (elemental) aspect is that universal form which is the object of the Yogin's devotion.

Manas, *ahaṁkāra* and *buddhi* are the three forms of the internal-organ or *antaḥkaraṇa*. They are, therefore, different from the five cognitive and the five conative senses which are called external-organs. During the process of knowledge when the external-sense creates an indeterminate-perception the operation of *manas* brings it to a determinate stage. Besides, all kinds of pleasure, pain, endeavour, malice, emotions of affection, etc. are the attributes of *manas* and not of the individual souls. Similarly, 'desire, resolve, doubt, faith, want of faith, steadiness, unsteadiness, shame, intelligence, fear' [1] are all the qualities of the mind and not of the soul.

It may, however, be observed that during an act of cognition or conation when there is the apperception, 'I resolve', the *manas* is both the object (*prameya*) and the means (*pramāṇa*) and there is no involvement of any other principle. The *manas* like *prāṇa* and other *indriyas* is atomic, [2] non-physical and is a different *tattva* in itself which is spontaneously manifested prior to the creation of the physical world.

(c) *Kārya-Koṭi*

Definition and kinds of *Kārya-Koṭi*.

Within this third category of the *prameyas* are included all those effects which do not serve as causes to further evolutes. These effects are infinite and innumerable. Yet, for a proper compre-

1. *Prasthānaratnākara*, p. 37.
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (I, 5, 3).

hension, they may be classified in numerous ways. According to Vallabha, these effects may [1] broadly be classified as : (a) universal (*samaṣṭi*) and individual (*vyaṣṭi*), (b) jīva and jaḍa, (c) *sattva*, *raja* and *tama* and (d) *Ādhidaivika*, *Ādhyātmika* and *Ādhibhautika*.

(a) *Samaṣṭi and Vyaṣṭi* : All effects or existents in the world may be classified under *Samaṣṭi* and *Vyaṣṭi*. The term '*samaṣṭi*' (universal) involves the concept of the unification and assemblage of numerous individuals within a universal form of existence, whereas, this unity is discarded in *vyaṣṭi*. Thus Brahmā is the *samaṣṭi* or the universal form of all cosmic existents, including individual soul and Nature. The different souls and separate items of Nature are the *vyaṣṭi* or the 'individual'. As an example, it may be illustrated that the human body which contains innumerable germs inside it is both *samaṣṭi* and *vyaṣṭi*; as a single body containing the diverse individual germs it is *samaṣṭi*, whereas, as an individual within the cosmos it is *vyaṣṭi*.

(b) *Jīva and Jaḍa* : All existents in the world are either spiritual or material; so the world may be classified into Soul and Matter. Though the *antaryāmins* are also within the cosmos, yet they are excluded from this category because of their blissful character; as their aspect of bliss is unshrouded they are included within the *svarūpa-category* only.

(c) *Sattva, Raja* and *Tama* : Taking the *guṇas* as the determinants of classification, the effects may be classified as *sāttvika, rājasika* and *tāmasika* in accordance with the predominance of a particular *guṇa* in their nature.

(d) *Ādhidaivika, Ādhyātmika* and *Ādhibhautika* : The universal spirit is the *ādhidaivika*, whereas the individual soul is the *ādhyātmika*. The difference between these two is only a matter of universality and individuality. Within the *ādhibhautika* category are included all those substances or existents, for example human body, that are composed of the five elements.

1. Ato na bhautikāni manaḥ prabhṛtini, kiñtu tattvāntarāṇi. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, on sūtra 2, 4, 22).
2. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās (120 to 122) with *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
3. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 697.
4. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (III, 10, 14).

Various other classifications may, however, be possible yet all this is only from the worldly or the phenomenal standpoint. As all these effects are the manifestations of the Ultimate Reality, Brahman or Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa alone is the real *prameya.*

(E) DISSOLUTION

(a) *Nature and Forms of Dissolution*

Meaning of *Pralaya* – Difference from Nyāya.

The term 'dissolution' (*pralaya*) in Vallabhism means the merging of the effect in its material or the inherent cause. In pursuance of the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* they totally disagree with the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika contention that dissolution implies a total annihilation of the effect consequent upon the destruction of its material and the instrumental causes and assert that dissolution is just another name for the merging of the effect in its cause. On the authority of the *Bhāgavata*, the Vallabhites maintain the following three kinds of dissolution.

Kinds of *Pralaya.*

(A) NITYA PRALAYA : The nature of this kind of pralaya is described by Śrī Śukadeva to King Parīkṣita in Canto XII of the *Bhāgavata.*[1] According to him, all things and creatures in this world are born and destroyed every moment. Because all transformable things, such as the river, stream, the flame and the like are in a state of constant flux we can logically conclude that all things including our bodies must also be undergoing change, birth and destruction every moment. This state of phenomenal existents is known as *nitya-pralaya* (eternal-dissolution).

(B) NAIMITTIKA PRALAYA : When at the end of the aeon there begins the Night of the Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, the world-creator, merges the whole universe including Brahmā in Himself and sleeps. This is called *Naimittika Pralaya* because during this state the fire originating from Saṁkarṣaṇa's [2] mouth is the condition for the dissolution of the world. The reason for this dissolution is the Brahman's or Lord Kṛṣṇa's wish to enjoy His Bliss in Himself (atmarati).

(C) PRĀKṚTIKA PRALAYA : When due to an imbalance in the three guṇas of Prakṛti, the seven evolutes, as stated in the *Sāṁkhya-kārikā,*

1. *Bhāgavata,* śloka (XII, 4, 35 to 36).
2. *Ibid,* śloka (XII, 4, 4). Trilokyāṁ dahyamānāyaṁ śaktyāsaṁkarṣaṇāgninā. (*Bhāgavata,* śloka III, 11, 29).

merge by stages in the Primordial Matter and bring about the destruction of the Cosmic-Egg, this dissolution is called *Prākṛtika Pralaya* because here the process of dissolution is initiated through the imbalance of the *guṇas* of Prakṛti.

In the Purāṇas, including the *Bhāgvata*, there is a mention of a fourth variety of dissolution termed as the '*Ātyantikī Pralaya*'[1] but, according to Vallabha, this kind of dissolution is included within the above three kinds. As a matter of fact, the *Ātyantikī-Pralaya* or Total Dissolution is communicative of the dissolution of *saṁsāra* or the sense and the feeling of Ego which represents the world as different from Brahman. Thus, when through knowledge and intensity of devotion, the *saṁsāra* is destroyed there comes about the state of Total Dissolution; this does not imply the dissolution of the *Prapañca*.

(b) *The Process of Dissolution*

The Process.

As described in the *Brahmasūtra*, the process of dissolution in *krama-sṛṣṭi* or progressive creation is just the reverse of the process of creation. Those evolutes that are manifested in stages merge in their cause by a reverse-process;[2] however, such others that are born simultaneously (*yugapat*) out of spontaneous manifestation — called direct-creation (*sākṣāt*) — merge spontaneously and simultaneously without any intermediary intervention or process. As argued by Vallabha, because the 'exit' is always in the reverse order of the movement of 'entry' it is rational to believe that the process of dissolution is also in the reverse order[3] of the process of creation, i.e., the things merge into earth, the earth into water, the water in fire and so on.

1. *Ibid*, śloka (XII, 4, 23), with Śridhara's commentary.
2. Viparyayeṇa tu kramo ata upapadyate.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 14; with *Prakāśa*)
3. Praveśaviparyayeṇa hi nirgamanaṁ. Kramasṛṣṭau eva etat.
(*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra 2, 3, 14)

CHAPTER XI

THE SUMMUM BONUM AND THE MEANS

Quest for freedom and immortality.

The ultimate pre-occupation of Indian thought and aspiration — probably also the earliest pre-occupation — has been the quest after 'freedom' and 'immortality'. The presence of the ephemeral and the mutable in the physical and the psychic individuality of man in his terrestrial existence has always been the cause of an overwhelming sense of dissatisfaction, grief and agony prompting him towards an everlasting search for perfection, freedom and immortality. The history of World Philosophy and Religion, particularly Indian, stands witness to the truth of the contention that the reason for the quest after wisdom is not so much the human sense of wonder at the sight of the mighty universe but the man's own turbulence and agony in the cauldron of this earth seething and bubbling with pain. This provides the psychological foundation to the origination and development of the various heterodox and orthodox philosophies of India — with probably the solitary exception of the Cārvāka Materialists — having Freedom or Liberation, the Mokṣa, and consequently, Immortality and Perfection, as their ultimate vision. It is, however, a different matter that some of the philosophical systems were satisfied with only a negative concept of 'freedom' as only the cessation of sorrows and sufferings while the others stressed upon the necessity of realising it as a positive concept of everlasting Bliss. Yet it remains the truth that Freedom divested of all kinds of limitations has not only been the intellectual and the emotional Ideal but also the criterion-concept[1] of Indian Culture. *Mokṣa* or Liberation is, therefore, the ideal of human achievement whose realization is supposed to bring eternal bliss and the consequent destruction of all kinds of sorrows and sufferings. It is not to suggest

1. Roy S.S. : *The Heritage of Śaṁkara*, Chapter VIII.

that Indian philosophical and cultural thinking conceived of no other ideal aim of human life, for it emphasised the importance of *dharma, artha* and *kāma* also for the achievement of phenomenal and transitory objectives, but to proclaim that *mokṣa* or Freedom being the only everlasting and transcendental objective was conceived, almost unanimously, as the ultimate and supreme Ideal (*puruṣārtha*) towards which all philosophical enquiries, moral disciplinc and religious devotion have been directed. Yet, the nature of the state of *mokṣa*, the Supreme Experience, has been described differently by the different systems of Indian Philosophy in accordance with their own ultimate metaphysical convictions and the concepts of the Ultimate Truth giving rise not only to a wide plethora of views among the principal philosophies of India but also within the masters and exponents of Vedānta itself. Vallabha being one of the exponents of Vedānta was in agreement with this universal Vedāntic conviction that *mokṣa* or salvation is a worthy human Ideal yet here he nodded only with reservation to contend that the state of Liberation (*mokṣa*), though Ideal, is not a state of Supreme Experience; to him, the Supreme Experience of Illimitable Bliss consists only in the direct knowledge and immediate experience of Puruṣottama and participation in His Eternal Sport. As this state is attainable only through the emotional and loving service of the Lord or Bhakti, this state, in its everlasting continuum, is even superior to *mokṣa* and is recognised in Vallabhite Philosophy and Religion as the fifth *puruṣārtha*, the real *summum bonum* of the individual-soul's terrestrial existence. We shall, therefore, first discuss the Vallabhite conception of *mokṣa* and then pass on to the ultimate *puruṣārtha* or the Ideal, namely, the soul's participation in Lord's Eternal Sport.

Divergence of views on the nature of *Mokṣa*.

Vallabha-participation in Lord's Eternal Sport, the highest Ideal.

Fifth *puruṣārtha*.

(A) THE NATURE OF MUKTI

The concept of *mokṣa* as an everlasting termination of sorrows and sufferings or as an eternal and unlimited Freedom and Immortality is as much a feature of the Vallabhite philosophy as of any other system, yet, it has the unique distinction of being the singular philosophical school that delves deeply into the mysteries of the various aspects of the nature of Supreme Bliss and the various stages that lead

to its achievement. Though all these stages, from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest apex, are characterised by all the features that are usually associated with the concept of *Mokṣa*, such as liberation from earthly bondage, freedom and immortality, yet they are much more than this. They represent a gradational manifestation of the unravelling of the Supreme Experience of Bliss hitherto uncharted in any other school of Indian philosophy and religion. To Vallabha and his followers, *Mokṣa* or Deliverance is not a negative state of total cessation of sorrows as professed in some schools of philosophy; it is a state of positive Bliss which is gradually manifested, in accordance with the spiritual qualifications of the individual soul and a state which, in its ultimate character of Bliss, is absolutely unconditioned as against the Śaṁkarite thesis relegating it to the sphere of the conditioned. As contended by Śaṁkara, in his commentary on *Taittirīyopaniṣad* "The *ānandamaya ātmā* belongs to the category of the conditioned ones; it is not the Supreme Self. Ānanda is an effect of meditation and rites, and *ānandamaya* is constituted by this bliss."[1] Vallabha, as we have already explained, while interpreting his contention that *ānandamaya* or the Blissful one is Brahman or Puruṣottama Himself who is the real *summum bonum* of human endeavour and achievement, vehemently opposed the Śaṁkarite standpoint. To him the Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa, as we have seen, is of the nature of Infinite Bliss and He in His Divine Grace imparts the experience of essence (*svarūpa*) of His Infinite Bliss to His choicest devotees who are accepted by Him as His own. In this Supreme Experience of the devotee, Vallabhism finds the realization of the ultimate human *puruṣārtha* or Ideal, the apex of the gradational statuses of *Mukti*. Inferior to this one, are the other two states in which the liberated soul after Brahman-realization finds an entry into either the Akṣara-Brahman or the *Vyāpi-Vaikuṇṭha* of the Bhakta (another manifestation of the Akṣara-Brahman). Consequently, Vallabha asserts that the pathways to these three different aspects of *mokṣa* are also three in number, namely, the Path of Knowledge (*Jñāna-mārga*), the Path of Traditional or Scriptural Devotion or the *Maryādā-marga* as propounded in the Vedic literature and the *Puṣṭi-mārga*, the mainstay and innovation of Vallabhism as Philosophy and Religion.

Gradational manifestation of Bliss.

Mokṣa, a state of positive and unconditioned Bliss.

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (II, 5, 1).

Sāyujya-mukti.

Though *mukti* is generally defined by Vallabha and his followers as *sāyujya* or the union with Brahman involving Brahman-realization (*Brahma-bhāva)* yet its character is differentiated on the basis of the nature of the aspect of the status of Brahman with whom the liberated soul gets into communion. The most inferior state is an identity (*abheda*) with the Akṣara-Brahman whose character has already been described in Chapter IV of this book. This state is the ultimate end of the followers of the Path of Knowledge, as professed in the Upaniṣads, who shrug their shoulders at the very idea of emotional devotion as an instrument of God-realization and understand that *jñāna* and *yoga* are the only efficacious means of achieving the ultimate end. These followers of

Jñāna-mārga.

the Vedic path of knowledge, the *jñāna-mārga*, who adopt the five aspects of *vidyā*, namely, renunciation (*vairāgya*) discrimination between the the eternal and the non-eternal (*sāṁkhya*), the eight-fold path of *Yoga* (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*), *tapas* or the mental state of deep meditation and *bhakti* (devotion) and engage themselves in the *śravana, manana* and *nididhyāsana* about Ātman succeed only in the suppression of nescience (*avidyā*) and its effects, i.e., the four kinds of superimpositions and the idea of the 'ego'. This leads to their union with the Akṣara aspect of Brahman in which there is only a limited manifestation of Bliss.

Bliss not co-extensive with Knowledge.

Vallabha was emphatic in his assertion that Consciousness or Knowledge is not co-extensive with Bliss as supposed by some of the schools of Indian Philosophy; had it been so, there could be no knowledge of grief. Thus Bliss is a separate and the most important aspect and attribute of Brahman which is present only in a limited measure in His Akṣara manifestation, a *vibhūti*; it is only the Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa, who being the innermost status of Being, is the repository of unlimited and infinite Bliss. The nature of liberation of the followers of the path of knowledge is, therefore, Akṣara-realization i.e., the

Union with Akṣara-Brahman the Ideal of *Jñāna-mārga*— Its nature described.

realization of Pure Existence. Pure Consciousness and limited Bliss. Having realized this state the liberated soul may either die and merge in the Indestructible Being or may continue in his mortal coil till the termination of his *prārabdha-karmas*. Even in this state of *Jīvanmukti*, the seer is free from the influences of *avidyā* and its effects.

This state of liberation, whether as *Videhamukti* or *Jīvanmukti*, has certain characteristics, according to Vallabha, that differentiate it from the other two states of emancipation to be achieved only by the devotees of the Lord and the followers of the Path of Devotion (*Bhakti-mārga*). Knowledge, as declared in the *Bhagavadgītā*, originates [1] from the attribute of *sattva*; consequently, the Path of Knowledge which adopts knowledge as a means of achievement is always *saguṇa*. The *Jñānis*, according to Vallabha, can never transcend the attribute of *sattva* which is evident from their persistent fear about the possibility of being overwhelmed by either *rajas* or *tamas*; this is why they renounce [2] the world out of fear. The natural corollary of this situation is the Vallabhite declaration that the state of *jīvanmukti* to which such seers as Sanaka and Sanandana belonged is only *sāttvika* and, therefore, a *saguṇa* state.

Jīvanmukti is *Saguṇa.*

Another characteristic of the state of Akṣara-realization of the followers of the Vedic path is that it, by the suppression of *avidyā*, qualifies the *jñāni* for the future realization of the nature and essence of Puruṣottama and entitles him to participation in His Divine Sport, if at all he is blessed by the Lord and he decides to follow the Path of Devotion. This state of union with Akṣara-Brahman is a sort of a launching pad to the achievement of the realization of Puruṣottama. Even this state of *mukti* is not acquired by the *jñānin* as a matter of course and as a natural outcome of his endeavour in following the path of knowledge; even here, the Grace of God is required for, as Vallabha unequivocally contends, liberation or *mukti* is always imparted by the Lord,[3] Even though *avidyā* (nescience) is suppressed by *vidyā* or wisdom, they are the effects of Lord's *Māyā*, freedom from whose clutches is possible only through His Will and Grace and not through any human effort. In this state of liberation, the *jñānī* realizes the Akṣara aspect of Brahman as immutable, undifferentiated, indivisible and one (*kevala*).

In his exposition of the Path of Knowledge as recommended in the Vedas, Vallabha repeatedly asserts that this spiritual path is

1. Satvāt saṁjāyate jñānaṁ. (*Bhagavadgītā*, śloka, 14, 17).
2. Ata eva jñānino bhītāḥ saṁsārāt viraktā bhavanti. (*Prakāśa* on *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 49).
3. Mokṣamicchejjanārdanāt iti vākyāt bhagavato mokṣadātṛtvāt. Na ca vidyayā iti yuktaḥ. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1081).

instrumental only in the sublation of *avidyā* and not in the acquisition of *mokṣa* or union with Godhead which is attainable only through devotion and surrender to the Lord. Lest one should be mislead into the belief that the intellectual knowledge of scriptures or hearing the *śrutis* (*śabdajñāna*) can directly be the cause of *avidyānivṛtti* (sublation of Nescience) and the removal of all sorrows and sufferings, Vallabha issues a note of warning that all such people and thinkers (e.g. Vidyāraṇya) are living in a fool's paradise. It is a matter of human experience that though intellectual and scriptural knowledge is efficacious in removing the sufferings or *kleṣas* of the mind (the *antaḥkaraṇa*) it is ineffective in the removal of various kinds of pains and sufferings such as those caused by diseases and by the inner darkness of man leading an immoral and devilish existence and the overwhelming and excruciating pain undergone during ones existence in Hell. These three kinds of pain are never subject to alleviation by intellectual and scriptural knowledge alone; they are removable only when *avidyā* with its four superimpositions is suppressed by *vidyā* (wisdom) which is not identical with *śabdajñāna*. The Vedas, according to Vallabha, instruct that the Ātman is different from such collocations as the physical body etc. and this Ātman is not different from Brahman. This realization of the identity of Ātman and Brahman, a foundational consciousness for the seeker after truth on the path of knowledge, is possible only when he is in a state of renunciation, engages himself in contemplation on the truth, as preached in the *śrutis* (*manana*) and practises deep concentration (*nididhyāsana*). It is, therefore, evident that though *śabda* may be an auxiliary condition in the attainment of Brahman-realization, the real causality belongs to *manas* — which is an *indriya* — in its state of deep-concentration or *nididhyāsana*. Moreover, as discussed before, testimony or *śabdajñāna* is always mediate in character. How can it then be causative in the generation of immediate knowledge of Brahman? The very idea of such a possibility is apparently a violation of the basic principle of *pramāṇa* that what is a means of mediate cognition can never be the means of immediate experience. The knowledge of the Ātman or Brahman, as acquired in *jñānamārga* is decidedly, to Vallabha also, an exclusively Immediate Experience possible only when the whole gamut of *avidyā* undergoes suppression at the rise of Wisdom (*vidyā*)

Scriptural knowledge leads to suppression of *Avidyā* and not to cessation of pain.

Wisdom not identical with scriptural knowledge.

in the true sense. It is why Vallabha frequently asserts that *avidyānivṛtti* is the real reward (*phala*) of the Vedic path of knowledge which provides with the knowledge of the Akṣara [1] aspect of Brahman and the capability of entering into the higher spiritual experiences of the Bhakta.

Difference between the Śaṁkarite and the Vallabhite concepts of *avidyānivṛtti*.

It may, however, not be irrelevant here to draw a distinction between the Vallabhite concept of *avidyā-nivṛtti* and its exposition in the Vedānta of Śaṁkara and his followers where it acquires considerable importance as a threshold to Liberation and the realization of the monistic ideal. Generally Śaṁkara and his followers, with the exception of Ānandabodhācārya and Advaita Vidyācārya, upheld the position that the sublation of *avidyā* is identical with Brahman-realization and is, therefore, synonymous with liberation or *mukti*. As Citsukha remarked in his *Tattvapradīpikā*, "The definition of *Mokṣa*, is the total annihilation of *avidyā* along with its various effects." [2] The Vedānta of Śaṁkara repeatedly emphasises that, according to *śrutis*, bondage is caused by the superimposition (*adhyāsa*) of the positive, beginningless and *anirvacanīya* principle of *Ajñāna* which is sublated only by the immediate and direct experience or knowledge of Ātman, the Ultimate Reality. By nature, the Ātman or the Self is eternally free and never subject to bondage but under the influence of *avidyā* and its effects it feels and understands as if it is in bondage and the only way to emancipation is the destruction of this *avidyā* through the knowledge of Brahman or Ātman. At the dawn of Brahman-realization, Nescience, with all its effects, vanishes along with bondage. The problem of emancipation for Śaṁkara is, therefore, not one of achievement and attainment but of realization only, to be accomplished through knowledge obtainable by human effort. The appearance of knowledge at the proper time when the *antaḥkaraṇa* is completely purified destroys the veil of *avidyā* and emancipates the individual-soul. In the words of Śaṁkara, "The knowledge that the Self is Brahman beyond abandonment and acquisition would, by destroying all pain, bring the Supreme Good." [3]

1. The Akṣara Brahman with whom the seeker of the path of knowledge acquires union should not be misunderstood either as the individual-soul or the Primordial Matter. According to Vallabha, it is that aspect of Brahman which is the foundation and the cause of the manifestation of Soul and Matter.
2. *Tattvapradīpikā*, p. 345.
3. *Brahmasūtraśāṁkarabhāṣya*, p. 11.

The philosopby of the suppression of Nescience (*avidyānivṛttī*) in Vallabha, which is the cause of the soul's attainment of *kaivalya* and the capability of discriminating between the eternal and the temporary leading to its union with the Akṣara Brahman, is different from the Advaitin's account on various counts. Firstly, because to Vallabha bondage is a real phenomenon caused by Lord's *Māyā* in the form of *avidyā*, its acquisition is also a fact; deliverance is, therefore, a reward obtainable by a perfect and total surrender to the Lord. Secondly, it is the Lord or Brahman who really imparts all varieties of *mokṣa* right up from the lowest, i.e., union with the Akṣara to the supreme manifestation of Bliss or union with Puruṣottama. Lastly, it is not knowledge but devotion which is the real instrument of Deliverance. When the Upaniṣads acclaim that knowledge causes *mokṣa* their intention is to convey that the knowledge of the nature and excellences of Brahman produces Bhakti which in its turn invokes the Divine Grace for the liberation of the individual — soul from the shackles of *avidyā*. When the *śrutis* proclaim that both immortality and Ātman are attained through *vidyā* or wisdom they always use the terms '*Ātman*'and '*vidyā*' in the sense of Brahman and Wisdom. Vallabha vehemently criticises the Śaṁkarite equation of the term 'Ātman' with the individual (*jīva*) as the distortion of the scriptural meaning. According to him, the *śruti* mostly uses the word 'Ātman' in the sense of 'Brahman'. Similarly, the word '*vidyā*' does not stand for intellectual and scriptural knowledge alone; it comprehends the whole gamut of Wisdom with all its five aspects as discussed before. Along with the other shortcomings of purely scriptural and intellectual knowledge as a valid means for the attainment of *mokṣa*, Vallabha finds that such knowledge is devoid of omniscience (*sarvajñatā*) which, according to the Upaniṣads, is a necessary qualification of Brahman-knowledge. Those who acquire knowledge about the human-self have scant knowledge of the material universe as a whole. How can they, then, be called omniscient? Thus, scriptural and intellectual knowledge such as that of the four *mahāvākyas* miserably fails in bringing about eternal deliverance or *mokṣa* from bondage caused by the inscrutable and mysterious *māyā* of Brahman.

Vallabhite meaning of *Ātman* and *Vidyā*.

Though in Vallabha's philosophy the concept of *mokṣa* is recognised as the union or *sāyujya* with Brahman, he is in agreement with other Vaiṣṇavites, e.g., Madhva, in recognising the four types of mukti,

The four types of *Mukti*.

namely, *Sālokya, Sārūpya, Sāmīpya* and *Sāyujya* on the basis of the conception of gradation in *Mokṣa*. It is after passing through the earlier three types that the individual-soul acquires *sāyujya* or union with Brahman which, in the context of the Vallabhite philosophy of 'identity and difference' is not total identity but only union with the Cause preserving its own individuality. Even during the merger with the Akṣara Brahman, the follower of the Path of knowledge does not totally dissolve into It bringing about a complete annihilation of his individuality as contemplated in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta. At the time of this union, the veil of the concealment of the soul's own nature of bliss is rented and, as a result, it acquires similarity with the Blissful and Conscious character of the Indestructible Truth or Akṣara Brahman. The Vallabhites are always emphatic that the conception of *sāyujya* or union in their philosophical standpoint is only one of indistinguishable similarity and not one of absolute identity.[1]

Sāyujya is not total identity; it is indistinguishable similarity.

The second state of liberation is an advancement over the achievement of the seer who has entered into the Akṣara; by God's Grace he is discontented with that situation and prefers to enter into a devotional communion with the Lord. As the liberated soul in this state is already purified, free from the influences of *avidyā* and well-qualified for devotional service to the Lord, it finds more bliss and spiritual satisfacation in serving the feet of the Lord. Such a devotee (*bhakta*) though still in union with the Akṣara Brahman realises in the inner space of his heart, so to say, the manifestation of *Param Vyoman* or *Vyāpi Vaikuṇṭha* which is the abode or the feet of Puruṣottama, It is one of the tenets of Vallabhite theology that whenever and wherever the Lord, the Supreme Puruṣottama, desires to appear there is a prior manifestation of His Abode or *Vyāpi Vaikuṇṭha*. Thus, this second state of liberation which is exclusively the state of a *bhakta* (devotee) is characterised by a special spiritual condition and bliss which is unknown to a pure follower of the path of knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*) Even though this state is also one of union with Akṣara Brahman, it is different from it in certain respects. Though the Akṣara Brahman is manifestated to the

Manifestation of *Vyāpi-Vaikuṇṭha* — the second stage of liberation.

Distinction between *Vyāpi-Vaikuṇṭha* and the state of union with *Akṣara*.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1056.

jñānī as *Saccidānanda*, unlimited by space and time, self-evident and transcendent, there is total concealment of all the celestial attributes of Brahman with the exception of His *tirodhāna-śakti* or power of concealment. But in the state of a liberated soul who is both a *jñānī* and a *bhakta* some of the celestial attributes [1] of the Lord are manifested through His Divine Grace. It is the presence or manifestation of these Divine attributes in this state of the devotee that distinguishes his state of liberation from the one of the pure *jñānī*. This is the highest state to which the followers of *Maryādā-Mārga* or the Scriptural Path of Devotion can venture to attain. Yet, it is an augury of the possibility of supreme attainment, the *sāyujya* or union with Puruṣottama and the achievement of the Highest Bliss. This is a state of real Brahman-realization (*Brahma-jñāna*) because it is immediate in experience (*aparokṣa*) as well as saturated with the blissful emotion [2] of devotion. Mere knowledge without devotional feeling is only scriptural and intellectual [3] in character, just a kind of mediate experience totally unworthy of being contemplated as *Brahma-jñāna*. Whenever the Upaniṣads speak of knowledge, they necessarily imply the character of its immediacy and blissful emotionality. As such, it is only when knowledge is accompanied with devotion that there is a real possibility of Brahman-realization which is scarcely available to the practitioners of Sāṁkhya and Yoga. Though Vallabha recognises the utility of some of the aspects of the philosophies [4] of these two systems in as much as he acknowledges the utility of the method of discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal so that the Self is cognised to be different from body, as propagated in Sāṁkhya, resulting in the destruction of the 'ego' and the Yogic practices of restraining the mind-stuff (*citta*) from [5] taking various forms (*vṛttis*) for making this knowledge about the Self unflinching and steadfast, yet to imagine that these two philosophical systems and their standpoints can by themselves lead to Brahman-realization without devotion or

Utility of Bhakti in *Brahman-jñāna*.

1. Ato jñāninām prakāśamāne akṣara brahmaṇi sarveṣāṁ dharmāṇāṁ tirobhāvāt ekasyāḥ tirodhānaśakteḥ eva prākatyāt nirdharmakaṁ iti vyavahriyate. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, Chapter III, p. 59).
2. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 225.
3. Tadjñānaṁ parokṣarupaṁ. (*Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 144).
4. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikās 212 to 214 read with *Tattvadīpa-prakāśa*.
5. *Yogasūtra*, sūtra, (1, 1, 2).

bhakti, as stressed in the Sāṁkhya and Yoga systems, is, according to Vallabha, a gross error; there can be no real and full Brahman-realization to a *jñānī* unless his soul is overbrimmed with the feeling of devotion and self-surrender to Brahman. The ultimate end of Sāṁkhya-Yoga philosophy is only the suppression of Nescience and not Brahman-realization.

Union with Puruṣottama is the highest state of human achievement.

The third, the last and the supreme state of human achievement is the union with Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa in which the soul realizes the real nature (*svarūpa*) of the Lord and takes part in His Eternal Sport to be graced with the rare spiritual privilege of enjoying eternal and infinite Bliss which till the achievement of that state has never been unfolded in full. This being a state of Infinite and Supreme Bliss (*paramānanda*) is so superior to the other two earlier states of *mukti* that very frequently, in Vallabhite literature, a distinction is drawn and the term '*mukti*' is used only for the two states of the *pure-jñānī* and the *jñānī-cum-bhakta*. The Vallabhite declaration that the achievement of Puruṣottama excels even liberation and Brahman-knowledge is only a resuscitation of this position and not an averment that this state is not liberation. When the devotee attains this state, *avidyā*, the cause of bondage, is already destroyed so that the devotee is eternally emancipated; so, 'liberation' is a term which is equally and even more prominently applicable to this Supreme State of Infinite Bliss.

In the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* we have the mantra : 'The knower of Brahman attains the Supreme.'[1] This Upaniṣadic text which is the bedrock of the Vallabhite philosophy of Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa, is superior to the state of the *Brahmavit* (the knower of Brahman) who, as described in another mantra ('The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself'),[2] obtains union with Brahman Itself. This state of Brahman-realization and union with Brahman which is all-pervasive[3] and transcendental (i.e., transcending *māyā* and her attributes) is inferior to the realization of Puruṣottama. The question now is : How does the *jñānī-bhakta*, the liberated-soul already unified with Brahman and devoted to the service of the Lord comes to obtain the full knowledge and enjoyment of Puruṣottama's Bliss? Vallabha answers this question

1. Brahmavidāpnoti param. (*Taittiriyopaniṣad*, mantra II, 1, 1).
2. Brahmavida brahmaiva bhavati. (*Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra III, 2, 9).
3. Brahmapadena ātmā vyāpako māyātadguṇasaṁbandharahito yaḥ sa evocyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra, 4, 4, 3).

by referring to the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* mantra which declares, "The one whom this Ātman accepts in Its Grace alone obtains; to him this Ātman reveals Its true nature". [1] The transition from Brahman-hood to Puruṣottama-realization is never an outcome of the soul's own prowess of spiritual upliftment notwithstanding its inherent qualification (*yogyatā*) to achieve the Supreme Ideal; it is essentially a result of God's Grace. It is only when the Lord out of His own willingness accepts the liberated soul in His own fold to allow him an entry into the blissful communion with His innermost status that the soul can take part in His Divine Play and enjoy the fullness of Infinite Bliss. Thus, the real reason for the achievement of this state in which the soul is ordained to obtain Transcendental Capacity or power (*alaukika-sāmarthya*) is God's selection or *varaṇa* irrespective of the soul's own qualifications for such achievement. The transcendental spiritual state in which the soul obtains communion with Puruṣottama with full manifestation of all His Powers except the one of the creation, sustenance and destruction of world-order is technically nomenclatured, '*Alaukika-sāmarthya*', in distinction from the earlier two states of the *jñānī* and the *jñānī-bhakta*. This supreme state is attainable by a *Puṣṭi-bhakta*, whether a *pure puṣṭi-bhakta* or a *maryādā-puṣṭi-bhakta* for the acceptance or 'selection' by God is essentially a matter of *Puṣṭi* or Grace, not one of individual-attainment. We now venture to elaborate the Vallabhite exposition of this supreme spiritual and transcendental state which is the Ultimate Ideal of human achievement.

God's Grace alone leads to the supreme achievement.

Alaukika-sāmarthya.

In the fourth section of the fourth chapter of *Aṇubhāṣya*, Vallabha ventures an explanation of the nature of spiritual experience involved in the attainment of Puruṣottama and the *modus-operandi* of this achievement. Here he refers again to the same *Taittirīya-mantra* and contends that after declaring that 'the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme, the *mantra* undertakes a description of this state when it further declares that 'one who knows Him in the Inner Space of his heart enjoys with Brahman all objects of desire' (Yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ, parame vyoman, so aśnute sarvān kāmān saḥ brahmaṇā vipaściteti). [2] The previous clause of this sentence — Yo veda nihitaṁ

Analysis of the Supreme Spiritual Experience.

1. *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra (1, 2, 23).
2. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, mantra (11, 1, 1).

guhāyāṁ parame vyoman — is a narration, as we have already discussed, of the state of Brahman-realized devotee within whom the Akṣara Brahman, as the feet of Puruṣottama, has already manifested; the succeeding clause — so aśnute sarvān kāmān saḥ brahmaṇā vipaściteti — is a description of the Supreme State.

The *mantra* unambiguously brings out certain unique features of the spiritual transcendental state. Firstly, it transcends *māyā* and its products, secondly, in it there is an enjoyment of all divine objects in numerous ways and, thirdly, this enjoyment of bliss is in communion with Brahman. This interpretation of the mantra, which is obviously different from Śaṁkara's commentary, has been objected to on several grounds that are even incorporated by Bādarāyaṇa in his *Brahma-sūtra* as the prime-facie view. The most important objection against the philosophy of enjoyment during a transcendental state of Being, such as that of Puruṣottama, is the presence of a tendency of phenomenalisation and attribution of phenomenal categories, the schema of subject-object-relation and dichotomy to the supreme state which is supposed to transcend all natural attributes and relations. The situation becomes more indefensible and outrageous when enjoyment of objects is professed as the greatest achievement of the devotee's relationship with Puruṣottama whose very nature is all Effulgent Bliss. Moreover, this state which is identified in Vallabha's philosophy with the state of '*Bhūman*' — as disclosed in the Nārada-Sanatkumāra dialogue of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* — overbrimming with the intensity of devotion and love such that the world with its objects presents itself as an image of Brahman (Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa), technically called *sarvātmabhāva,* in which the separation of the Lord generating the sentiment of *viraha* plays a very significant role — as we shall discuss in the next chapter — is a blatant application of the mundane human situation with its sentiments and moods to the transcendental aspect of Being displaying an outlook of vulgar anthropomorphism. Again, in the transcendental state of communion with Puruṣottama there is no possibility of any physical body or object. How can then there be any objective enjoyment in diversified forms as contemplated by the term '*vipaściteti*' in the *Taittirīya śruti* (as per the Vallabhite interpretation)? Apart from the nature of Divine Sport presenting a philosophical difficulty, the

Enjoyment during the transcendental state.

The objection.

problem of the *modus-operandi* of the devotee's communion and relationship with Puruṣottama at the threshold of entry into this state also presents a difficulty that can hardly be pared down.

The Vallabhite reply.

These objections are rebutted by Vallabha by pointing to the imbecility of opponent's mind that is prone to explain all descriptions of emotions, enjoyments, objects, etc. as necessarily belonging to the physical phenomena only. The opponents of the theology of Divine Sport and participation in the Bliss communicated by the Lord fail to realize that it is on the strength of the Lord Himself that the *śruti* makes a mention of the enjoyment of objects during the course of His Divine Sport which is absolutely transcendental, eternal, immortal and beyond the human ken. This state, realizable only by a devotee and expressed through scriptures alone, is inaccessible to human logic and *pramāṇa*; as such, it is a perversity, according to Vallabha, to associate it with phenomenal categories and relations irrespective of the Scriptural announcement that it is purely transcendental and spiritual. This state of transcendental-capacity (*alaukika-sāmarthya*) identified with the '*Bhūman*' of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* is a state of *sarvātmabhāva* where the individual-soul realizes and enjoys with all its supernatural senses and *antaḥkaraṇa* [1] the eternal and infinite Bliss as manifested to the jīva by the Blissful Lord through His Eternal Sport involving transcendental schema and dichotomy of the 'subject' and the 'object'. To Vallabha and his followers the presence of this scheme in the supreme state is no reason for denunciation [2] because they are transcendental and supernatural, manifested by the Lord's Wish, through His supra-rational powers, for providing the devotees with a taste of the inner and the secret springs of the nectar of Bliss of His Divine Existence. A symbolic representation of this state of communion with the Puruṣottama, known as Goloka, is available both in the *Rāsalīlā* of the *Bhāgavata* and the particular mantra of the *Ṛg-Veda* that declares : "We desire to reach those places (i.e., Gokula) where the long-horned cows and deers exist." [3] In Vallabhism the celestial and spiritual state of Gokula is superior to that of Vaikuṇṭha, manifesting itself in the devotee's heart, essentially because Vaikuṇṭha as a devotional state within the Akṣara Brahman is a sort of stepping stone to the

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1229.
2. *Ibid* on sūtra (4, 4, 13), p. 1410.
3. *Ibid* on sūtra (4, 2, 15). p. 1323.

achievement of the Supreme Blissful State of Gokula, where the Lord's Bliss is revealed in all its profusion and infinite variety on account of his essential capacity to be the ground of all contradictory attributes (*viruddhadharmāśrayatva*). Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha [1] endeavours to prove on the authority of the Vedic and other scriptural texts that the Sport of Kṛṣṇa is as eternal and everlasting as the Lord himself for it is eternally projected by Him. The special mention of the satisfaction of 'desire' in the *Kāmacāra-śruti* [2] is no violation of the transcendental character of this state because the 'desire' in the *mantra* concerned refers specially only to the spiritual joy related to communion with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and to no mundane object.

The State of *Bhūman*.

The objection about the presence of sorrow and pain during *sarvātmabhāva* is also invalid because, as we shall observe, this state is ultimately identical with Bliss and Immortality. The state of *Bhūman* [3] or *sarvātmabhāva* is different from the states of both *mukti* and *jīvanmukti* for here the devotee realizes the all-pervasiveness of Godhead with all his senses and *antaḥkaraṇa*; in the state of *mukti*, as union with Akṣara, there being a dissolution of senses and *antaḥkaraṇa* no such supra-rational experience is possible.

Spiritual and supra-rational body.

The objection about the impossibility of enjoyment without a 'body' is replied by Vallabha by taking recourse to the doctrine of the presence of a spiritual and supra-rational body. Vallabha contends that Vyāsa propagated the theory, as against Bādari, that Brahman, in the final state, provides [4] the jīva with a celestial body along with divine senses and *antaḥkaraṇa*, to enable it to enjoy the bliss of His Divine Sport. The concept of 'body' as commensurate with 'destruction' and 'phenomenality' is applicable only to a natural-body and not to a supernatural, celestial and spiritual body given by God in His providence. Such spiritual matters, according to Vallabha, can only be realized by the devoted saints and seers in their immediate, transcendental experiences and not by the logomachy of mundane phenomenal souls. The scriptures being the revelations of these divine experiences can alone vouchsafe the truth of the description of these

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 175.
2. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VII, 25, 2).
3. *Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa*, p. 1127.
4. *Ibid* on sūtra (4, 4, 12).

states. It may, however, be confuted that the Upaniṣads speak of the Ultimate State in diverse ways, sometimes mentioning it as '*niranjana, niṣkala* etc.', sometimes as embodying enjoyment. How are we, then, to harmonize these statements ? Vallabha, as we have already noted, always stressed upon the real and the indicative meaning of the scriptural texts, without either having recourse to figurative interpretation or categorising the *śrutis* as primary and secondary. He, therefore, argued that the apparent anomaly in the meaning of the scriptural texts is due to the fact that the scriptures, always mindful of the spiritual qualifications of the enquirer (*adhikāra*) revealed to him only that which was significant from his point of view. We have, therefore, certain texts in the Upaniṣads that preach the path of knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*), some that tell about the *maryādā-mārga* and others that describe the ultimate spiritual state of Bliss and the Divine Sport, the ideal of the *Puṣṭi-mārga*. There is, thus, a perfect harmony among the *śrutis*; the defect lies not in them, but in our own fallacious understanding. The absence of the description of enjoyment during the state of liberation in some of the Upaniṣads, e.g., the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* should not be construed as a denunciation of the doctrine of enjoyment or the *sasambodha*-theory. The truth, according to Vallabha, is that Yājñavalkya [1] did not enter into the exposition of the nature of the Experience of Brahman, the Puruṣottama; an analysis of this Experience was, however, undertaken in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* where the doctrine of enjoyment was strongly upheld.

The opponents may, however, put forth two particular difficulties in the forefront. Firstly, about the possibility of the manifestation of objects and, secondly, with regard to the question as to how the jīva having limited knowledge and power of action can communicate with Brahman who is the abode of unlimited knowledge and power. The first objection is replied by Vallabha by resorting to the theory of manifestation (*āvirbhāva*) by which, according to the Will of God, the veil [2] of *māyā* concealing the different objects is removed rendering them capable of enjoyment; these objects that form part of the very *svarūpa* of Puruṣottama have not even an iota of any physical or natural attribute. Moreover, the *āvirbhāva*-theory also maintains that the Brahman-realized-devotee after being selected by Puruṣottama and

1. *Ibid* on sūtra (4, 4, 14), p. 1415.
2. *Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1414.

propelled by a strong desire for a loving service of God acquires a state in which it is endowed with the capacity for entering into an experience of union or inseparability with Him. This is a state of *āvirbhāva* referred to in the scriptural text mentioning, 'after having acquired Brahman'. The problem of communication between jīva and Brahman is resolved by Vallabha through the doctrine of *āveśa*

The Doctrine of *Āveśa*.

according to which the jīva, by itself, is incapable of spiritually communicating with Brahman; it is enabled by the *āveśa* of Brahman. Just as the flame of a lighted lamp lights the oily wick [1] of another lamp, the entry of the Lord in the heart of the devotee overbrimming with devotion and longing for service and communion provides him with bliss and qualification for entering into His Divine Sport. Thus, as remarked by Vallabha in his *Aṇubhāṣya*, "When God desires to bless the jīva-already provided with a celestial body by God-with all spiritual enjoyments with Himself, He Himself, in accordance with the requirements of such enjoyment enters into his celestial body; such an entry or *āveśa* is the means of enjoyment." [2] All this *līlā* and the enjoyments provided therein are always positive and objective like a waking state and never false or transient like a dream.

This, in short, is the Vallabhite exposition of the Supreme State of Experience attainable only by the graced devotee of Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottama. Such devotees never aspire for *mokṣa* which is just the *sāyujya* with the Akṣara Brahman for to them such *mukti* is a great [3] fall and, therefore, despicable. God or Kṛṣṇa rarely graces a soul with *bhaktiyoga*, the solitary means of achieving this end. As Kṛṣṇa himself told Uddhava in the *Bhāgavata* : "I dispense with *mukti*, but seldom the *bhaktiyoga* to any one."

Like other systems of Vedānta, *mukti*, in Vallabha's philosophy also, is classified as (1) *Saddyomukti* and (2) *Kramamukti* in accordance with the manner of release. Vallabha's own interpretation of these two concepts is as follows :

1. Pradīpavadāveśastathāhi darśayati. (*Brahmasūtra*, 4, 4, 15 with *Aṇubhāṣya*)
2. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1417.
3. *Ibid.* p. 1234.

Saddyomukti.

(1) *Saddyomukti* : *Saddyomukti* or instantaneous release is an exclusive privilege [1] of the devotees of the Scriptural or the Traditional Path (*maryādā-mārga*) who possess both knowledge (*jñāna*) and devotion (*bhakti*). When such a devotee with a total detachment of his mind from worldly objects [2] and affairs and free from every sense of ego, following the process of *Asaṁprajñātayoga,* enters into an inward meditation of God in the inner space of his heart and continues in this state till his last breath he, after his death, is instantaneously released. The reason for his instantaneous or *saddya-mokṣa* is the fact of the *āvirbhāva* or manifestation of Brahman in his heart at the moment of his demise.

Krama-mukti.

(2) *Krama-mukti* : The souls [3] who follow the path of knowledge and take resort to such means as action (*karma*), worship (*upāsanā*) and knowledge attain liberation indirectly as a gradual process. Such wise-souls even though fully detached, yet conscious of the outer-world, go, after their death, by the path of light (*arcirādi-mārga*) or *devayāna* and then acquire liberation through different processes in accordance with the rewards for which they are entitled. From Brahmaloka or the region of Brahmā they go to the abodes of Vāyu, Varuṇa [4] and then ultimately achieve emancipation. This form of *mukti* is the reward of only those souls that follow the path of knowledge (*jñānamārga*).

(B) ESCHATOLOGY

Dhūmayāna and *Devayāna*

Regarding the Vedic Eschatology ascribing the smoke-path or *dhūmayāna* to transmigratory souls engaged in desired action and lost in mundane existence and the *devayāna* or the path of light to the emancipated wise-souls, Vallabha declared that though this is true yet the path of light is meant only for the followers of *jñāna-mārga*. The devotees, both of the *maryādā-mārga* and the *puṣṭi-mārga*, on the other hand, enter into instantaneous union with Brahman after the destruction of their *prārabdha-karmas* and subtle-bodies.

1. Maryādābhaktānaṁ tu pūrvokta rītyā saddyomuktireva iti siddhaṁ. (*Prakāśa*, p. 1340).
2. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikās 205 to 207 with *Tattvadīpaprakāśa* and *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.
3. In *Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa* five kinds of *Kramamukti* are described according to the forms of worship undertaken by the soul. (kārikās, 208 to 211).
4. *Aṇubhāṣya* with *Prakāśa*, p. 1344 to 1348.

The important question discussed in this connection is whether the five elements of the subtle-body also move along with the jīva or not. Vallabha, to whom the problem of the movement of the soul to different regions is really associated [1] with *manas* and its modifications (*vikāras*) impelled by past action, Kāla and Will of God, declared that the subtle-body along with speech (*vāk*) and *manas* is always associated with the mundane-soul (*pravāha-jīva*) during its movement to the nether or higher regions. The elements of the subtle-body of the wise-seer and the devotees of the Scriptural Path, who acquire *krama-mukti* and *saddyomukti* as their [2] rewards are, however, merged in the five *mahābhūtas*. On the other hand, when the devotee of the *Puṣṭi-mārga*, at the time of his death, enters into communion with Paramātman all the elements of his subtle-body along with his *manas* [3] and *karma* get dissolved in Puruṣottama. He is, then, as per the Grace of God, endowed with a transcendental and celestial body for participation in the Divine Sport and attainment of *bhajanānanda*.

(C) THE MEANS OF ATTAINMENT

In Vedic literature, including the Upaniṣadic, and its subsequent interpretations in the *Smṛtis*, the *Āgamas* and the *Purāṇas*, three different paths to the attainment of the spiritual Ideal or the *summum bonum* in consonance with the nature of this Ideal are mentioned; these paths are commonly known as the Path of Works or Action (*Karma-mārga*), the Path of Knowledge (*Jñāna-mārga*) and the Path of Devotion (*Bhakti-mārga*). Though Vallabhācārya, as a doyen of the Bhakti-movement, was a protagonist of the Supreme Ideal, the knowledge of the true nature of Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa and participation in His Infinite Bliss, he none-the-less recognised the efficacy and importance of the other two paths and ventured to explain their concepts and significance as originally contemplated in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. As the Vallabhite interpretation of the meaning and the validity of these different paths of attainment has immense significance and value as rungs in the ladder to the supreme attainment, we turn to discuss them here a little at length.

The three paths.

1. *Subodhinī* on Skandha X, p. 46.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (4, 2, 6), p. 1310.
3. *Ibid*, p. 1302.

(a) *The Path of Works (Karma-mārga)*

In the *Pūrva-kāṇda* of the Vedas, the performance of sacrifices, rituals and ceremonies enjoined by the Vedic injunction (*vidhi*) and abstinence from that which is prohibited constitutes the *dharma* to be followed by the votaries of the Vedic Faith. Whereas it was stressed upon that the performance of the *nitya* (obligatory duties and the *naimittika-karmas* (occasionally obligatory duties such as the birth ceremony at the birth of a son) was an essential duty, certain sacrifices (*yajñas*), as detailed in the *Brāhmaṇas*, were necessarily to be performed if one desired to attain the *svarga* (heaven) or the fulfilment of wishes. As explained in the Pūrva Mīmāṁsā system, a sacrifice, when performed in accordance with Vedic injunctions, produced in the action (*karma*) itself or in the agent a novel potency or faculty, called *apūrva*, which produced in time the beneficial results of the sacrifice. "This *apūrva* is like a potency or faculty in the agent which abides in him until the desired results follow." [1] By dint of this *apūrva* created by the sacrifice, the performer attains the celestial regions. As regards salvation or *mokṣa*, the Pūrva Mīmāṁsā system, representing the thought and the convictions of the Vedic Pūrvakāṇda, contends that it can be brought about when a man has fully enjoyed and suffered the fruits of his good and bad deeds — and thus has exhausted them carefully — and stops the further generation of new effects by refraining from the performance of *kāmya-karmas* and guarantees himself against the evil effects of sin by assiduously performing the *nitya-karmas* [2], Thus, the main thrust of the argument advanced by the representatives of the Sacrificial Religion of the Vedas and the votaries of the philosophy of *Karma* or Action was that the performance of Vedic *Karmas*, as mentioned above, would lead to man's highest Ideal. On the other hand, any wilful or inadvertent non-performance would lead to his degeneration and transmigration to nether regions.

Dharma according to *Pūrva-kāṇḍa*.

The Doctrine of *Apūrva*.

Mīmāṁsā–Vedic Karmas instrumental in Deliverance.

This philosophy of Karma produced adverse reactions in various quarters of Indian Thought and Religion finding its acme in Saṁkara's denunciation

Śaṁkara's criticism.

1. Dasgupta, S.N. : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 405.
2. *Ibid*, p. 402.

of *karma* as a means to salvation. To Śaṁkara, all works (*karmas*) being diametrically opposed to self-knowledge, like darkness to light, their performance, in as much as they are done with some desired end, is an impediment to Brahman-realization and attainment of *mokṣa* because the real knowledge of Self, and not action, is the only means to salvation. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, castigated that such an outright denunciation of the path of action is quite unworthy because *karma*, in itself, is not a negation or contradiction of knowledge; it is only the *sakāma* or the motivated *karma* that creates obstacle in the path of spiritual progress. Moreover, such varieties of *karmas*, as worship (*upāsanā*), tapas, yogic-practices etc. are useful for the achievement of knowledge and devotion and as such a wise man must adopt both knowledge and *karma* as means to salvation. Rāmānuja, therefore, propagated the doctrine of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*.

Rāmānuja's theory of *Jñāna-karma-samuccaya.*

Śaṁkara, during the course of his denunciation of the Mīmāṁsā philosophy of *karma*, had questioned if at all *karmas* have an efficacy in leading to Brahman-knowledge and thus to salvation; to him, this was impossible because "The Self, in its real nature, is neither a thing to be created, transformed, achieved or purified, nor is It of the nature of an agent or enjoyer whereby It could become a factor in karma."[1] The Mīmāṁsā contention that the knowledge of Ātman or Brahman is just a part of *karma* and an *arthavāda* is absolutely redundant and a misrepresentation of the real purport of the Upaniṣads. The same problem is raised by Vallabha in the fourth section of the IIIrd Adhyāya of his *Aṇubhāṣya* where he, despite his acceptance of the path of *karma* as a real and valid means to the attainment of knowledge, was constrained to acknowledge that 'actions' as prescribed in the *Pūrvakāṇḍa* of the Vedas do not lead to *sarvātmabhāva* or the state of *nirguṇa-bhakti* which is the only means of attaining the Supreme Ideal—the union with Puruṣottama and participation in His Divine Sport. He also refuted the Mīmāṁsā standpoint, like Śaṁkara, that the knowledge of Brahman as taught in the Upaniṣads (*Uttarakāṇḍa*) is only to provide full knowledge of the Deity and thus is a part of *karma* or *yajña*, because the exposition of the nature of Brahman in the Upaniṣads is so elaborate and profound that it would be absurd to

Vallabha's refutation of Mīmāṁsā.

1. Śaṁkara's Introduction to *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*.

imagine that the Upaniṣads have no intention of treating it as a separate subject of discourse and describing it only as a part of the wider discussion on the topic of Sacrifice. Moreover, the *śrutis* occasionally remark that Sacrifice is a means of knowledge and immortality is a reward of the renunciation of *karmas*. Therefore, according to Vallabha, it is irrelevant to imagine like the Mīmāṁsakas that the knowledge of Brahman is a part of the knowledge of Sacrifice. The truth is, however, otherwise; it is the 'sacrifice', action or *karma* that is recognised as the means to the attainment of Brahman-realization when they are performed without any motive or desire and in a spirit of surrender to the Lord.

Sacrifice and Karma as means to *Brahman-jñāna*.

But Vallabha did not condemn and denounce outright the utility and function of *karma* in the lives of men. To him, the sacrifices and rituals or the duty (*dharma*) as prescribed in the *Karma-kāṇḍa* portion of the Vedas is not antagonistic to the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* (especially the Upaniṣads); they are mutually complementary. Yet, they are prescribed only for that particular class of men [1] who are ignorant, egoistic, full of mundane desires and aspiring only for pleasurable gains as their ultimate end. For men of such qualifications, God has manifested himself in the form of Yajña (*yajño vai viṣṇuḥ*) providing for them a means of attainment. But the ultimate objective of such a religion of Sacrifices performed with a distinct motive, is always some superior region (*loka*) or the heaven from where there is always a return after fulfilment of enjoyment. The reward of the path of Action performed with desire is, therefore, always transitory leading [2] the human soul to world of sorrows and sufferings and the circle of transmigration. Vallabha, therefore, discarded such a path of action as an impediment in the real spiritual progress of the individual soul and its attainment of the Supreme Bliss. Notwithstanding the futility of desired-action Vallabha emphasised that all *nitya-karmas* [3] (obligatory duties) are always to be performed by all men, even those who have attained Brahman-realization because their non-performance might result in the accrual of sins. Worship (*upāsanā*), *tapas* and yogic-practices, that are also actions, are necessary for creating and rejuvinating the feeling

Vedic *Karma-kāṇḍa* complementary to *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1199.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārika, 16.
3. Nityakarmaṇo hi jñānasādhanatvaṁ ucyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1202 & 1207).

of devotion; they are thus the means to the attainment of *bhakti* [1] which is the ultimate instrument of emancipation and union with Puruṣottama. The performance of sacrifices, [2] in accordance with one's stage in life, is always essential; study of the scriptures (*svādhyāya*) is the sacrifice of the celibate (*brahmacārin*), the performance of ritualistic sacrifices is the *yajña* of the householder, *tapas* is the *yajña* of those who have entered into *vānaprastha* and mental concentration and devotion of God is the *yajña* of the Sannyāsin. So, unless and until a soul has acquired real wisdom and has become omniscient (which is one of the characteristic of wisdom) it is its duty to follow the path of *Karma*. But a note of warning is issued. It would be disastrous, from the ultimate standpoint, to associate oneself with desired and *sakāma karmas* for the Upaniṣadic text unambiguously asserts that 'immortality can be achieved neither by action nor by progeny but by renunciation (*tyāga*) alone.' [3] Vallabha, therefore, asserts that renunciation in a specific sense is an essential means to the attainment of Wisdom and Devotion.

The meaning and importance of Sannyāsa.

In his commentaries and other monographs, Vallabha was emphatically assertive that 'renunciation' always characterised total mental dissociation from worldly objects-attainable by intense emotional attachment to Kṛṣṇa — and not mere physical separation born out of compulsion. Therefore, he did not favour giving up the life of a householder till one had attained the state of *vyasana* [4] (this concept we shall discuss in the next chapter). Renunciation, in the true sense, is necessary and is an important condition for the attainment of spirituality. But then, how is this to be compromised with the doctrine of Karma? The answer to this question according to Vallabha — as to the *Bhagvata* itself — lay in the assertion that all the *karmas* should be performed desirelessly with a view that they are not for one's own self but for God. As Śaṁkara said in one of his hymns, "O Śiva! all these actions performed by me are only worship to you." [5] This is the

1. Tathā sati bhaktisādhanatvenaivānuṣṭheyaṁ iti tātparyeṇa karmavidhirucyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1205 to 1206).
2. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, p. 287.
3. Na karmaṇā na prajayā tyāgenaiva amṛtatvamānaśuḥ.
4. *Sannyasanirṇayaḥ*, śloka, 7.
5. Yat yat karmakaromi tad tad akhilaṁ śambhostavārādhanaṁ.

permeating spirit about karma throughout the *Bhāgavata* and the *Gītā* and naturally the cornerstone of Vallabha's philosophy of *karma*. Actions performed selflessly - the *niṣkāmakarmas* - with full dedication to God divest the *karmas* of their sins and impurities; they purify the *citta* or the *antaḥkaraṇa* and thus pave the way for knowledge which leads to the attainment of *bhakti* which alone is the real and the ultimate means of Puruṣottama- realization. Sacrifice, dāna (giving alms), worship, tapas, yoga, etc. in themselves do not lead to the attainment of Puruṣottama; they are only the stepping stones to the fulfilment of *bhakti*. The utility and function of desireless (*niṣkāma*) *karma* as a means to the Supreme End is, therefore, only indirect and not direct. The scriptural texts, according to Vallabha, enjoin the performance of sacrifices and rituals only for ignorant men and not those who aspire after liberation or the knowledge of Brahman. The teachings in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads are not intended for all and sundry; they have different commandments for people of different qualifications (*adhikāra*). Whereas the *śruti* is specifically unambiguous that such *sakāma karma* (works done with desire) as the sacrificial-rituals are meant only for ignorant people seeking enjoyment in worldly life, the desireless action contributes to knowledge and thus serves indirectly as a means to the highest achievement. Thus, to Vallabha, *karma* is not a *puruṣārtha* in itself but only a means; its effectiveness as an instrument is limited only to the removal [1] of obstacles, and the impurities of *antaḥkaraṇa* that impede the attainment of wisdom or *vidyā*. This also justifies the performance of physical and mental controls (*śama* and *dama*) during the state of spiritual preparedness (*sādhanadaśā*) till the spiritual End is achieved. The Vedic injunction for all types of controls, physical and mental, has relevance only till a seeker after truth has not realized the state of Brahman-hood and never after obtaining the state of Wisdom.

The *Niṣkāma-karma.*

The Vallabhite Doctrine of *Karma* lays considerable emphasis on renunciation as a necessary effective means of attaining knowledge and immortality as recognised in the Upaniṣadic texts. The injunction of *karma* is only for those who have no *vairāgya*. But once a man has shed off all affections for worldly objects, the performance of *karma* is not at all binding on him. Renunciation or *sannyāsa*, in one stage

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1181.

or the other, may be obligatory. According to Vallabha, renunciation may be resorted to in one of the two situations : (1) in the fully developed *nirguṇa* and unconditioned *bhakti* where the devotee, by nature, is overwhelmed with the emotion of separation from Kṛṣṇa (*vigāḍhabhāva*) and (2) in the case of those who have not achieved this state of love and devotion in its fulness, for example Uddhava. In the former case, renunciation is necessarily associated with the state of *nirguṇa-bhakti*, whereas, in the latter 'renunciation' is an effective means to the attainment of *vigāḍhabhāva*. Renunciation, in its true sense, is a necessary pre-condition to wisdom and the true knowledge of Puruṣottama.

The doctrines of *karma* and renunciation are in *Maryādāmārga*.

Here it may be observed that the above theory of *karma* and renunciation as a means to the Supreme End is only for those seekers and devotees of Truth who follow the Scriptural and Traditional Path, the *Maryādāmārga*. For those who have been selected by the Lord for the *Puṣṭimārga* there is no need for any means because for them Puruṣottama Himself is both the means and the end.

Before moving on to a discussion on the second means of spiritual attainment, the *Jñānamārga*, it may not be futile to cast some reflections on certain important philosophical issues connected with *karma*. First of all, it may be argued that the Vallabhite philosophy of the Will of God as the real motivation and basis of all human activity is not only a propagation of the worst kind of determinism but also fundamentally at variance with the Vedic moral belief that reward to a soul is always in accordance with its actions. Vallabha, in his commentary on the sūtra, '*Kṛtaprayatnāpekṣastu vihitapratisiddhāvaiyart hyādibhyaḥ*' reconciles [1] the doctrine that God is the ultimate agent with the moral conception of man's responsibility in obtaining rewards in life with his assertion that though God is the real dispenser of fruits, His retribution is generally in accordance with the works (*karmas*) of the individual soul. However, the whole plan of the activity of the various souls and their related rewards within the gigantic Cosmic Sport is already preconceived in the Divine Mind. It is why, as Viṭṭhalanātha argues, notwithstanding the clear injunctions and prohibitions in the Vedas, the individual

Vallabhite theory of moral actions and rewards in the light of God's ultimate Agency.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 749 to 750.

souls very frequently disregard their commandments and behave otherwise. This explains that the individual soul is not absolutely independent in the performance of its works. Viṭṭhalanātha further elaborates this conception, in his *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*,[1] by explicating the real meaning of the above *sūtra*. In the beginning, Brahman for enjoying His Bliss, desired to be many and thus entered into sport. Within this sport He conceived of the individual souls, its actions, and the rewards to be provided to them. Thus the whole moral relationship of actions and rewards though valid and operative, is already within the scheme of the Divine Sport dependent on Lord's Wish. The Vallabhites, therefore, assert that though God is the real and the ultimate propeller, He dispenses the rewards to such worldly souls (*pravāha-jīvas*) in accordance with their *karmas* within the overall scheme of His Sport. Yet, it is within the power of God to be so merciful to a soul that He may retrieve him for ever from the shackles of bondage and the phenomenal relationship of 'actions' and 'rewards'. Morality is, therefore subservient to God's Wish; it is not absolute.

Difference between the Vallabhite and the Advaitic approaches to *Karma-mārga*.

The Vallabhite exposition of the path of *Karma*, it may be contended, is reminiscent of the Advaitin's treatment where too the path of works is recognised as a means to the purification of *antaḥkaraṇa* for the true attainment of knowledge. Are the two approaches really identical? Vallabha denies this point and demonstrates that the Śaṁkarite philosophy of Action is not the real *Karmamārga*[2] of the Vedas. Because in the Śaṁkarite philosophy the *yajñas*, the gods and the objects of worship are unreal and non-eternal, from the ultimate standpoint, their performance can never lead to a real purification of heart. Even the moral conception of 'action' and 'reward' is also irrelevant in the context of the Vedānta philosophy of the unreality of world. Vallabha is categorical in his assertion that for obtaining properly the rewards of the Vedic *Karma-mārga* the reality of Sacrifice, the gods, the moral principle, etc., has to be fully maintained and this is possible only in accordance with the Śuddhādvaita philosophy of manifestation and concealment; the *Karma-mārga* as propagated in Advaita Vedānta is, therefore, irrelevant and ineffective.

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 90.
2. *Prakāśa* on *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 17.

(b) *The Path of Knowledge (Jñāna-mārga)*

In the Upaniṣads or the Vedānta, prominence is attached to the instrumentality of the knowledge of Ātman or Brahman as the ultimate means to the attainment of Immortality and Liberation. This knowledge which is an immediate and self-evident experience — not merely verbal or logical — is supposed to be the outcome of a long disciplinary training in renunciation (*vairāgya*), discrimination (between the eternal and non-eternal), *tapas* and *yoga*; it involves, as such, the acquisition of *vidyā* or wisdom with its five aspects (*parva*) as discussed before. The emergence of *vidyā* suppresses *avidyā* (nescience) with its five knots and provides the jīva with a potentiality to move further on the spiritual path. Those who are not blessed with the spark of devotion in their hearts attain the Akṣara aspect of Brahman; on the other hand, those individuals souls which adopt the path of devotion realize the *Paraṁ-Vyoman* or that Akṣara Brahman which is manifested as the feet of Puruṣottama. According to Vallabha, the Upaniṣads while propagating the path of knowledge always imply the involvement of *bhakti* so that it may be a proper means to the attainment of Puruṣottama. The mere knowledge of Brahman, which is always *Saguṇa*, as we have observed, ends only in a union with the Indestructible Immutable Reality — the *Saccidānanda* with only [1] a limited manifestation of *ānanda* (bliss), a Reality which is self-evident, transcendent and beyond spatio-temporal limitation. If, however, in this state the wise-seer is blessed with a devotional attitude and emotion towards the Concrete, Personal and Attributive aspect of Brahman , there is manifestation of that svarūpa of the Akṣara Brahman which is described as *Paraṁ-Vyoman* or *Vaikuṇṭha*. In the absence of devotion, however, there is no manifestation of the *Paraṁ-vyoman*-state and the Akṣara state of the *pure-jñānī* untreated with *bhakti*, continues to remain only a condition of capability [2] for the attainment of Puruṣottama. But to a seeker of the path of knowledge blessed with devotion, the Lord manifests in his heart the particular kind, or the aspect, of *Vaikuṇṭha* which is the substratum of that particular sport or *līlā* whose experience the Blessed Lord wishes to provide to the wise devotee. The real purpose of the Upaniṣadic teaching of the Path of Knowledge (*jñānamārga*), according to Vallabha, is to direct all humam beings to this end so that they may ultimately enjoy the infinite Bliss of the real nature of Puruṣottama and participate in His Divine, Celestial and Transcendental Sport.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 11.
2. *Ibid* with *Prakāśa*, p. 1153.

Most of the significant characteristics of the path of knowledge or *Akṣaropāsanā* (the Akṣara worship) have already been discussed, at length, in this chapter while elabrating the doctrine of *Mukti*. We shall, however, reproduce them in a nut-shell in order to acquaint the readers with its essential features as contemplated by Vallabha and his followers.

Brahman, not jīva, is the object of knowledge.

First of all, the object of knowledge in the Vedic *Jñānamārga* is Brahman and not the individual soul, because, as contended by Vallabha, the apparent reward of *Akṣaropāsanā* is the attainment of omniscience (*sarvajñatva*) and brilliance (*teja*) which serve as the distinctive marks of a real knower of Brahman. But, these are never attained merely by hearing to such *śrutis* as 'Tat tvaṁ asi' (Thou art that). It is futile and absurd for the Advaitins to contend that merely by hearing, 'Thou art that', and knowing about one's own individual self (*pratyagātman*) one can attain 'omniscience' for no one has ever become omniscient by this process. The real object of *Jñānamārga* or the Path of Knowledge is, therefore, Brahman and not the jīvātman. The masters and the exponents of Vedānta were clear in their mandate that the object of enquiry or knowledge is always Brahman; this is why the Uttara Mīmāṁsā aphorisms have been entitled the '*Brahmasūtra*'. Vallabha consistently, and sometimes at pains, demonstrates in his writings that whenever the word '*Ātman*' is used in the Upaniṣads, as an object (*viṣaya*) of knowledge, it is always in the sense of Brahman with His transcendental attributes.

Brahman-realization in *Jñāna-mārga* is internal.

Secondly, the realization of Brahman in this particular path is always within and not without as in the case of *Bhaktimārga*. The seer following this path realizes Brahman as immutable, immobile, indeterminate, impartite and all-pervasive and all this within himself. But how such a realization is possible in the context of the Vallabhite philosophy of the difference of the individual soul from Brahman? Vallabha solves this problem by introducing the doctrine of *Āveśa* or Possession. According to him, such Upaniṣadic texts as, 'I am Brahman', and Vāmadeva's declaration do not suggest the metaphysical identity of the individual soul and Brahman, as conceived in the Śāṁkara School of Vedānta, but instead establish the entry of Brahman in the jīva or its possession by Him. During the *āveśa*, only a few of the attributes of Brahman are spiritually transferred to the soul for providing it with beatitude and reward of its worship (*upāsanā*).

Realization of identity due to *āveśa*.

Just as 'fire' pervades an 'iron-ball', Brahman with His qualities pervades the individual soul during its possessed existence. Yet, this possessed-state or the state of trance is only a temporary phase and not a permanent situation to justify a total identity between the soul and Brahman. Similarly, the purpose of the famous *Chāndogya* text, 'Thou art that' (*Tattvamasi*) is also not a declaration of the identity of Being between jīva and Brahman. According to the Vallabhite explanation, as available in *Aṇubhāṣya*, the real intention of the *śruti* in teaching this identity is to save the devotee[1] from instantaneous death caused by the intensity of the emotion of separation from the Lord. Due to the intolerable character of the emotion of separation— a point to be discussed, in detail, in the next chapter — a devotee is sure to shake off his mortal physical frame. At this juncture — the *śruti* teaches the identity of the soul with Brahman and thus convinces him that the Puruṣottama is already with him; this assurance tempers the intensity of his emotion to sustain his life. Thus Vallabha, notwithstanding his recognition of the philosophy of difference of the individual soul with Brahman seeks a justification for the realization of the Akṣara aspect of Brahman within the heart of the *jñānī*. The mode of the presentation of this realization is fundamentally different from that of the *bhakta* or devotee; to him the manifestation of the Lord, the Puruṣottama, is always outside his own self.

Reasons for the scriptural teaching of identity.

Thirdly, though the object of knowledge in *Jñānamārga*, the Akṣara Brahman, is always *nirguṇa*, transcending the three *guṇas*, yet this path, as already explained by us, is always[2] *saguṇa* — as against the path of devotion which is always *nirguṇa* — because it involves the operation of the *sattva* attribute. Moreover, in this path, there is no involvement of the jīva's senses, *antaḥkaraṇa* etc. and its power of action (*kriyāśakti*) as they are always brought to control by the performance of the eight-fold path of Yoga. But, as we shall observe in the next chapter, the highest state of *sarvātmabhāva* in Bhakti implies the involvement of the human senses, mind, etc. for the realization of this state.

The path of knowledge is *saguṇa*.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtras (3, 3, 36 to 37).
2. Yaddyapi jñānamarge api viṣayo nirguṇo tathāpi mārgaḥ saguṇaḥ. (T.D.N. *Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa* with *Prakāśa*, p. 53).

Knowledge can destroy only latent *karmas*.

Fourthly, in this particular path all the latent *karmas*, i.e., those whose function for giving reward has not yet begun [1] (*anārabdha karma*), are destroyed by the fire of knowledge after Brahman-realization. However, for those who follow the *Maryādāmārga*, the duration and the modality of the operation of the *prārabdha-karmas* depends on the wish of the Lord Himself. The author of the *Brahmasūtra* is clear in his contention [2] that knowledge does not destroy all *karmas*; it destroys only those that are latent and have not started functioning.

Thus the Vallabhite interpretation of the Vedic *Jñānamārga*, to sum up, consists in the assertion that the object of knowledge in this path is always the Akṣara Brahman. This specific knowledge causes the removal of nescience (*avidyā*) which in its turn becomes a means for the manifestation of limited bliss — also termed as *svarūpalābha* or the attainment of one's intrinsic nature — ultimately resulting in the knowledge of Brahman (*Brahmajñāna*) if, however, the seeker is devotionally inclined towards the Lord. The knowledge of the Akṣara, the cause of *Brahmabhāva*, is, to the follower of the *Maryādāmārga*, only a prior stage of inseparability or *avinābhāva* with Puruṣottama.

Refutation of the Śaṁkarite explanation of *Jñāna-mārga*.

This interpretation of the Vedic *Jñāna-mārga* is essentially different from that of the Sāṁkara School of Vedānta where the removal of nescience ultimately leads only to the knowledge of Self and not to the knowledge of Brahman — as contended by Vallabha — in contravention of the dictates of the scriptural texts. The Śaṁkarite philosophy of the total destruction of *avidyā* by knowledge is also irrelevant because, as we have already observed, avidyā can only be suppressed and never destroyed in toto by *vidya* or knowledge, a point amply demonstrated by the Śaṁkarite doctrine of the non-destructibility of the *prārabdha-karmas* — a product of *avidyā* — by knowledge. The Śaṁkarite theory of knowledge as an ultimate means of emancipation is a misinterpretation of the principal thesis and the main purport of Upaniṣadic philosophy. The *Jñāna-mārga* of the Advaita Vedānta is, therefore, from the Vallabhite standpoint, only a deliberate misinterpretation of Vedic philosophy and gnosis born out of Śaṁkara's hidden sympathies towards Buddhist Ideologies.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1288.
2. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (4, 1, 15) with *Aṇubhāṣya*.

(c) *The Path of Devotion (Bhaktimārga)*

Importance of *Bhakti*.

The third and the most important means of God-realization, in fact, the only means from the Vallabhite standpoint, is the path of *Bhakti* or emotional devotion to the Ultimate Supreme Being, the Puruṣottama. The recognition of this path is not a speciality of the later age of the *Purāṇas*; it is fully embedded in the teachings of the Upaniṣads obtaining a comprehensive development in the philosophical argument of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* mantra enjoining that 'It is attained by him alone whom It selects'[1] and the *Muṇḍaka's* declaration that 'this Ātman is not attained by one devoid of strength'[2] (here, strength as per the Vallabhite interpretation stands for '*bhakti*') unequivocally emphasise the utility and importance of 'devotion' as a means to the cherished ultimate goal. The *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata* are, however, replete with such statements that not only descry but forcefully assert that the Lord is attainable only through *Bhakti*[3] and by no other means. Kṛṣṇa reminds in the *Gītā* that 'He can be realized by devotion alone; whereas, in the *Bhāgavata* He tells Uddhava; "Neither Śāṁkhya nor Yoga, nor scriptural studies, nor *tapas* nor renunciation lead to my attainment in that way as does *bhakti*."[4] Vallabha, whose philosophical convictions, on the whole, are founded on the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata* takes up this torch and radiates the light of *bhakti*, subserving all other pathways to God to its glorious fulfilment. As a doyen of the Bhakti movement Śrī Vallabhācārya excelled all other protagonists of this historic tradition, like Rāmānuja, Madhva and others — with the exception of Śrī Caitanya and his School — in propounding that *bhakti* as an emotional spiritual approach and communion with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not only a means but an end in itself. In undertaking this task, he not only brought into focus and revitalized the traditional and the scriptural concept and practice of *Bhakti* (the *Maryādāmārga*) but also formulated, on the basis of the *Bhāgavata*, a novel doctrine founded on the principles of love, surrender and God's Grace, in disregard of the scriptural values and injunctions, to vouchsafe for the liberation and spiritual excellence

1. Yamevaiṣavṛṇute tena labhyaḥ. (*Kaṭhopaniṣad*, mantra, 1, 2, 23).
2. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra (III, 2, 4).
3. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (XI, 54).
4. *Bhāgavata*, śloka, (XI, 14, 20).

of not only the upper-caste but also the low, the downtrodden and the outcast in society. As it is obvious from his small treatise entitled '*Kṛṣṇāśraya*', Vallabha was convinced that the socio-political condition in India had so degenerated as to render it completely unworthy of undertaking the performance of the Vedic paths of Action, Knowledge and Yogic discipline for the fruitful reward of spiritual upliftment. He, therefore, declared that total surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa with a perennial flow of love towards Him and His Games is the real panacea for all the ills of mortal existence. This devotional approach that anchors not on the worth and capabilities of the individual soul but exclusively on God's Grace and Mercy and regards love for God not as a means but a reward in itself destroying in its trail all the sufferings and shackles of bondage, known as *Puṣṭi-mārga*, is the most unique and outstanding contribution to Indian Philosophy and Religion. *Bhaktimārga* is, therefore, the most important and effective pathway to God-realization and salvation and, to Vallabha, undoubtedly the only path to spiritual realization or knowledge of the true nature (*svarūpa*) of Puruṣottama and participation in his eternal sport ensuring to the devotee a free access to the perennial springs of the nectar of Brahman's Eternal Bliss. To the achievement of this End, all other Vedic means, such as *Karma* and *Jñāna*, function only as instruments meant for the people of different mental qualifications. The *karma* and the *jñāna yogas*, as we have already observed, indirectly lead, step by step, to *Bhakti* serving as the highest consummation of human effort, the only means for the realization of Puruṣottama.

Puṣṭi-mārga.

Bhakti-mārga the only path to God-attainment.

Karma and *Jñāna* only instrumental to the achievement of *Bhakti.*

Vallabha, in all his major and minor works, repeatedly harps on the point that devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Ultimate Reality and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the real duty of man. For freedom and immortality a man must devote and surrender himself to this original and foundational aspect of Being (*mūlabhūta*) by adopting the nine-fold path of hearing (*śrvavaṇa*), singing (*kīrtana*) repetition of God's name etc. as preached in the *Bhāgavata*. The real nature and character of 'service' to Lord Kṛṣṇa is always mental; it is only for its achievement that physical and monetary service has to be resorted to during the

Devotion and Self-surrender the real duty.

Nature of service

preliminary stage leading to purified mental state of unhampered loving contemplation of the Divine Person, called *Bhakti*, which ultimately leads to the true knowledge of Puruṣottama's nature (*svarūpa*) and immortality and freedom of man. The Advaitin's claim, as already mentioned in the foregoing pages of this book, that knowledge, not devotion is the ultimate instrument of human emancipation and that *Bhakti* has its utility only for the purification of mind is, for the Vallabhites, a deliberate misrepresentation to suit the ends of their ultimate philosophical position. For the Śaṁkarites, the object of devotion is only imaginary (*kalpita*) and conditioned [1] (*aupādhika*) which is against the dictates of scriptural texts. According to Vallabha, all the objects and forms of devotion being the expansions (*vibhūti*) [2] of Brahman are Brahman Himself and thus absolutely real. Moreover, knowledge in itself, is never the ultimate means of salvation; wherever the *śruti* refers to the attainment of immortality through [3] wisdom it is always 'knowledge combined with devotion.'

Criticism of the Śaṁkarite theory of *Bhakti*.

Vallabha and his followers emphasize the supremacy of the path of devotion over the other two Vedic paths on various grounds. First of all, as already observed, the path of knowledge can lead to the attainment of only the Akṣara [4] aspect of Brahman, whereas, it is *Bhakti* alone that provides with a true knowledge of Puruṣottama and participation in His Divine Sport. Secondly, while treading over the path of knowledge one has to undergo the difficult and the painful task of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* (the eight-fold discipline of Yoga), mental and physical controls, etc., so that the mind of the seeker after truth is completely purified but for the *puṣṭibhakta* all this is unnecessary. It is by virtue of the intensity of his devotion to the Lord that all the sins and impurities of mind are washed away. Finally, there is also a difference in the process of the destruction of sin (*pāpa*) or *karma* in these two pathways to God. In *Jñānamārga*, the *karmas* of the individual soul are burnt only after Brahman-realization [5], whereas, in the *Bhaktimārga* they are destroyed anytime by the Lord as per His

1. *Vidvanmaṇḍanaṁ*, p. 130 to 131.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, p. 40.
3. Vidyayā amṛtamaśnute, (*Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, mantra 11).
4. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1060.
5. *Ibid*, p. 1071.

own Wish. The path of devotion is, therefore, the Supreme Vedic Path; it is to be followed by all who desire to achieve the *summum bonum* of human life.

The most important question now is: what is the nature of *Bhakti* in Vallabha's system and how is it different from the treatment given to it by the other masters of the Vaiṣṇavite movement? We, however, propose to discuss this problem, at length, in the next chapter and shall confine ourselves here to the kinds of *Bhakti* as recognised by Vallabha and his followers.

Kinds of *Bhakti*

In Vallabhite philosophy and religion the classification of *Bhakti* is mainly in two broad divisions, namely, *Maryādābhakti* and *Puṣṭibhakti* and all other classifications are included within them. The principal characteristics of these two classes are as follows :

1. MARYĀDĀ-BHAKTI

Maryādā-bhakti.

Maryāda-bhakti or the Traditional and Scriptural Devotion is that kind of *bhakti* that follows the injunctions, prohibitions and the methodology dictated by the Vedic texts comprehending the performance of actions, worship (*upāsanā*), tapas etc. leading to the knowledge of Brahman with the specific motive of securing and obtaining deliverance (*mokṣa*). The *maryādā-path* is always routed through the path of knowledge involving the path of action for the purification of *antaḥkaraṇa*; during the course of its travel the *maryādā*-soul has to undergo the rigorous discipline of the Yoga[1] before it can acquire union with the Akṣara Brahman leading to Brahman-realization (*Brahma-bhāva*). It is only then that the individual soul, consequent upon its purification, obtains the natural capacity and qualification to possess the Supreme Devotion or *Parābhakti* which leads to the knowledge of Puruṣottama's real nature and *sāyujya* (union) with him.

It is a determining characteristic of *maryādā-bhakti* that it depends on human effort in performing the various kinds of *upāsanās*, *tapas*, yogic-discipline, etc., as taught in the Scriptures, that ultimately lead to Supreme Devotion so that these means (*sādhanā*) are always a necessary condition for its evolution. Besides, what distinguishes

1. Vallabha recognises only *sabīja-samādhi*. *Nirbīja samādhi* is valid as long as it is resorted to for the knowledge of Self.

a *maryādā-bhakti* form *puṣṭi-bhakti* is the presence, in the mind of the devotee, a desire [1] for liberation so much so that very frequently aspiration for the knowledge of Brahman serves as a means for the attainment of Mokṣa. *Bhakti*, in this particular path, is always subservient to some kind of Vedic means and is the ultimate means for achieving emancipation and immortality; *karma* and *jñāna*, being the lower rungs of the ladder, are, thus, only auxiliary conditions and causes generating immense intensity of love towards Godhead associated with a deep sense of His glory and greatness (*māhātmya*). Śrī Vallabha's averment, in his *Tattvadīpanibandha* [2], that one who serves God or Kṛṣṇa with love after fulfilling the five essential conditions of renunciation (*vairāgya*) namely, disinterestedness (*niṣkāma*), knowledge (*jñāna*), *yoga* (*cittavṛtti-nirodha*), love and *tapas* attains liberation (*mokṣa*) is an explanation of *Maryādā-mārga* where *Bhakti* with the other four aspects or conditions of *Vidyā* is always instrumental. The exposition of *Bhakti* in Śāṇḍilya's *Bhaktisūtras* and other *śāstras* is always a resuscitation of the *maryādā-path* [3] in as much as they have employed *Bhakti*, even of the *Parā*-type, only as a means to union (*sāyujya*) with God. Even the performance of the nine devotional disciplines as enjoined in the *Bhāgavata*, viz., *Śravaṇaṁ* [4] (hearing narratives of the glorious deeds and excellences of Viṣṇu), *Kīrtanaṁ* (chanting His name and reciting hymns in His praise), *Smaraṇaṁ* (remembering Him continuously), *Pādasevanaṁ* (serving Him) *Arcanaṁ* (worshipping Him), *Vandanaṁ* (paying obeisance to Him) *Dāsyaṁ* (practising the role of a servant of His), *Sakhyaṁ* (looking upon Him as an intimate freind) and *Ātmanivedanaṁ* (surrendering oneself totally to Him), is contemplated in this path as a means to *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* or *sāyujya* with Puruṣottama.

Vallabhism as a religion distinguishes between four varieties of the devotees and seekers after Truth according to their eligibility, their mental conditions and attitudes, and arranges [5] them in gradation. The lowest are the followers of Sāṁkhya unassisted with any devotional attitude. The second are those who always meditate on Kṛṣṇa but without

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1069.
2. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 95 with *Prakāśa*.
3. Muralīdharadāsa's commentary on *Śāṇḍilya-bhakti-sūtra*, sūtra (1, 1, 2).
4. Swami Tapasyananda : *Nārāyaṇīyaṁ*, p. XXXIX.
5. *T.D.N.* Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa, kārikā with *Prakāśa* and *Āvaraṇabhaṅga*.

any emotion of love. The third variety consists of those sages who resort to a combination of both knowledge (*jñāna*) and devotion (*bhakti*). As remarked by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*, about them, 'Such glorious souls are difficult to be found'. The fourth and the supreme variety is the category of the *Puṣṭi-bhaktas* who are always engrossed in the meditation and love of God. As we shall discuss in the following pages, love is the only means of their access to God and that too is obtained not by human effort but by the Lord's Divine Mercy. According to Vallabha, the *Maryādāmārga* is adopted by people belonging to the third category of *adhikārins*; this is why the *Maryādā-mārga* is also called the middle path. The Vallabhite categorisation of the seekers after Truth in accordance with their spiritual qualifications and eligibility (*adhikāra*) is also the basis of their reconciliation of different scriptural texts for, according to them, the *śruti* has different injunctions and prohibitions for people of different spiritual qualifications.

The *Maryādā-mārga* is also termed '*Vihita-mārga*'[1] because it is scripturally ordained. Besides the classification of *Bhakti* as *Maryādā* and *Puṣṭi*, Vallabha mentions two other classifications in his *Aṇubhāṣya* namely, (1) *sopādhika* (conditioned) and *anaupādhika* [2] (unconditioned) and (2) *sādhāraṇī* and *asādhāraṇī*. In *sopādhika* devotion, the devotee worships such *aṁśāvatāras* as Matsya (fish), Varāha, etc., whereas in *nirupādhika*-devotion only the *mūla-rūpa* of Brahman, i.e., Kṛṣṇa is the object of devotion. The second classification rests on the form of the object of devotion. In *sādhāraṇī-bhakti* [3] the devotee worships the different *Avatāras* as the manifestations of the Supreme Godhead, whereas, in the *asādhāraṇī* or the *aikānti-bhakti* he, out of excess and intensity of love, devotes his mind only to one form and figure of the particular *Avatāra*. The distinctive feature of *sādhāranī-bhakti* is the devotee's mental consciousness that it is Brahman that is present in all the *Avatāras*; the *aikānti-bhakti*, on the other hand, always stresses upon and is lost in the form of the Lord as manifested in that particular incarnation without any idea of His Brahma-hood. Though in the *Maryādā-mārga*, the other incarnations may also become the objects of devotion, Vallabhism as a religion stresses upon Kṛṣṇa-worship for, according to this School, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead or the Original Form of Brahman, the *Saccidānanda*.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1104.
2. *Ibid*, p. 1000.
3. *Ibid*, p. 1011.

2. PUṢṬI-MĀRGA

Characteristics of *Puṣṭi-mārga*.

Śrī Vallabhācārya's most important contribution to Indian Philosophy and Religion, in general, and the Vaiṣṇavite movement, in particular, is his doctrine of Grace or *Puṣṭi* and his propagation of *Puṣṭimārga*, the path of Grace, as the supreme and the most elevated form of 'devotion' functioning as the religious and practical side of his philosophy of Pure Monism. This particular way of devotion is basically distinct from the Scriptural Path of Devotion, followed by the earlier masters like Rāmānuja and Madhva, and the Path of Knowledge in as much as it is grounded absolutely on the sentiment or the mood of Love towards the Divine Personality, Kṛṣṇa, irrespective of the various means of achievement described in the Scriptures usually for the three upper classes of society and not for the people of low-castes, the down-trodden and the women for whose salvation Vallabha was deeply worried. Moreover, it was also clear to Vallabha that with the changes in times and the socio-political condition of India, the accurate performance of the three Vedic paths was extremely difficult, if not impossible. He, therefore, was in search of a pathway which could lead the whole of humanity, irrespective of sex, caste, creed, nationality and social status, to God. By His Divine Grace Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself taught him this path along with the ritual of *Brahma-saṁbandha* (relationship with Brahman) and self-surrender, as described in his *Siddhānta-rahasya*,[1] for the benefit of mankind. It is not to suggest that Śrī Vallabhācārya was the first to obtain a glimpse of this royal road to Divinity; the Canto X of the *Bhāgavata* is itself a lucid commentary on the methodology of this particular form of devotion enjoining its supremacy over all other pathways to God. Vallabha's contribution, however, lies in theorising and interpreting this concept with a view to formulating it as a doctrine of deliverance in accordance with the needs of the changing times. It is, therefore, called the fourth path, different from the three earlier paths of Action, Knowledge and Scriptural Devotion. Yet, Vallabha was insistent that the *Puṣṭimārga*, which is also termed *'Avihita-mārga'*[2] is not against the Vedas; the germs of this *Doctrine of Grace* are already contained in the Upaniṣadic texts proclaiming the achievement of the Supreme Reality only by those whom It selects. The Upaniṣadic doctrine of selection (*varaṇa*) is thus the basis of the Vallabhite conception of Grace and the philosophical foundation of

Vallabha's contribution.

The fourth path.

1. *Siddhānta-rahasya*, śloka 1.
2. Because this path does not follow the scriptural injunction.

Puṣṭimārga which is a new, unique and basically different approach to God. It is the way of heart, an emotional approach of True Love towards Lord Kṛṣṇa in utter disregard of other achievements and ends involving 'a pure form of spontaneous integration between philosophy and deeper sentiments' [1].

Meaning of *Puṣṭi*.

Now the question is : What is '*Puṣṭi*' which is the basis of *Puṣṭimārga* [2] ? In the *Bhāgavata* '*puṣṭi*' is explained as the synonym for 'God's Grace' or Mercy. It is, therefore, that particular attribute of God by virtue of which He showers His Grace and Mercy on the different individual souls selected by His Divine Will. This Grace is, therefore, instrumental in providing both empirical (*laukika*) and transcendental (*alaukika*) rewards even to those who are ineligible and are without all the necessary means as established by the life — histories of many noble and ignoble souls-both historical and mythological — such as Ajāmila and Indra. From the point of view of achievement,

Kinds of *Puṣṭi*.

Puṣṭi or God's Grace is nomenclatured differently as *Mahāpuṣṭi*, *Sarvabādhakapuṣṭi*, *Sāmānyapuṣṭi* and *Viśeṣapuṣṭi* meaning as under [3] :

(1) *Mahā-puṣṭi* (The Supreme Grace) : This particular Grace forcibly removes all obstacles lying on the way to God and leads the devotee to His lotus feet.

(2) *Sarvabādhaka-puṣṭi* (Grace that destroys all obstacles) : This kind of Grace destroys all the effects of actions, temporal conditions and the natural qualities of things that might obstruct the materialization of the reward blessed by the Lord.

(3) *Sāmānya-puṣṭi* (General Grace) : This kind of Grace is instrumental in obtaining every variety of desired end, except the attainment of Puruṣottama's real nature.

(4) *Viśeṣa-puṣṭi* (Special Grace) : This Grace helps an individual soul in attaining a particular kind of devotion which leads to the realization of Puruṣottama's real nature (*svarūpa*). As such, *Bhakti* caused by the Lord's Special Grace is called *Puṣṭibhakti* which, in turn, is the foundation of *Puṣṭimārga*.

1. Bhatt, R.K. : *The Vedānta of Pure Non-Dualism*, p. 45.
2. Poṣaṇaṁ tadanugrahaḥ, (*Bhāgavata*, śloka 2, 10, 4).
3. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Puṣṭiviveka, p. 77.

The followers of *Puṣṭimārga* decline to seek after any end other than the realization of Puruṣottama's (or Kṛṣṇa's) real nature. This is why *Puṣṭibhakti* is also defined as the one which has no other end in view. As remarked by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhāgavata*, "Those who have surrendered themselves to me do not aspire for either *Kaivalya* or Yoga-siddhi."[1] It is thus clear that *Puṣṭimārga*, as propounded by Vallabha, is a theory of devotion which denounces any desire or purport, even *mokṣa*, other than the realization of God's real *svarūpa* and participation in His Divine Sport. Thus, the only end of *Puṣṭimārga* is the attainment of *Alaukika-sāmarthya* as explicated in the foregoing pages.

Kinds of *Puṣṭibhakti*.

The *Puṣṭibhakti* or devotion dependent on Lord's Grace is of the following four types[2] :

(1) *Pravāha-puṣṭibhakti* : This type of *bhakti*[2] is a quality of those souls who, notwithstanding their dedication to *Puṣṭimārga*, are naturally inclined towards the world with a sense of the 'I' and the 'mine'. They are, therefore, interested in the performance of actions. But as they are devotees of the Path of Grace, they engage themselves in such works that are related, in one way or other, to God (e.g., *Pāñcarātra-upāsanās*). Śrutadeva and Nimi are the examples of such souls.

(2) *Maryādā-puṣṭibhakti* : It[3] is a speciality of the *Maryādāmārga* that it dissociates the individual-soul from attachment towards worldly objects motivating it towards the path of renunciation. Therefore, all such souls who possess this type of *bhakti* shed off every kind of attachment and engage themselves in hearing, singing and meditating upon the glories of God. They have a perfect knowledge of God's attributes, sattva etc., and are aware of His glorious creation. Bhīṣma is an expmple of such souls who possess this type of *bhakti*.

(3) *Puṣṭipuṣṭibhakti* : This class of devotion[4] is intrinsically different from the former two types. In this there is absolutely no effect of either the *pravāha* or the *maryādā* attributes. Instead

Characteristics of pure Puṣṭi-Devotion.

1. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (XI, 14, 14).
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Puṣṭiviveka Chapter, p. 83 to 85.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

the devotee seeks after only the knowledge of God's true nature and, as a result, is blessed with a full and perfect knowledge of the Lord's Divine Sport, its means and the true character of the universe (*prapañca*); in other words, it becomes omniscient (*sarvajña*). This type of *bhakti* is always an outcome of the Lord's Special Grace propelled by His Will that the blessed soul which is already ordained to *puṣṭi-path* may know Him. Instances of such omniscient souls are Nārada and Ṛṣabhadeva. To the Vallabhites this kind of *puṣṭi-bhakti* is the ideal and the limit of human spiritual attainment, because the fourth variety, namely, the *Śuddhapuṣṭi* is an exceedingly difficult path. The human soul must, therefore, seek after *puṣṭipuṣṭibhakti* [1] and thus engage itself in the loving devotional service to God after obtaining full knowledge about His nature, attributes and glory.

(4) *Śuddhapuṣṭibhakti* : According to Vallabha [2], this pure variety of *Puṣṭibhakti* is a result purely of God's Grace and is never an outcome of human effort. It is independent of all means and, in its ordeal, is like walking on the razor's edge.

Though the *Puṣṭimārga*, as a whole, is a doctrine in which the generation of the emotion of loving devotion is always dependent on God's Grace and is invariably contemplated as an end in itself, and never a means to another end, involving a total negation of any desire for reward including *mokṣa*, the Path of Pure-Puṣṭi, is endowed with certain special characteristics as enumerated by Śrī Harirāya in his work titled '*Śrīpuṣṭimārgalakṣaṇaṁ*'. According to him, this path of Pure Puṣṭi is entirely dependent on God's Grace which is so independent and absolute that it is always inconsiderate of the qualifications of the individual-soul and the possibility of any reason in His Divine Selection (*varaṇa*). Even persons of evil propensities and immoral life have been chosen and accepted by God within His fold by His Divine Grace (e.g., Ajāmila). For a devotee of this kind God is both the end and the means and all mundane and Vedic rewards are provided as per God's Wish though the devotee himself is quite disinterested in them; to try for anything other than the service to the Lord may even create obstacles in his spiritual advancement. In this path of devotion, all the activities of the devotee are directed only towards the service of the Lord and

1. Jīvaiḥ puṣṭipuṣṭibhaktyārthaṁ yatanīyaṁ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, Puṣṭiviveka, p. 87).
2. *T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 203.

all empirical objects are treated as belonging to Him without even an iota of one's own personal attachment. The difference between the renunciation of a *puṣṭi-bhakta* and that of a *maryādāmārgī* consists in the fact that, whereas the follower of the Scriptural Path of Devotion or that of the Path of Knowledge completely denounces any relationship with the world and its objects, the devotee of the *Puṣṭimārga* sheds off only his personal egoistic attachment, as mine, and treats them as the manifestations of the Blissful Lord.

The only basis of the devotee's relationship with God is Pure Love, unstinted with any desire other than the enjoyment of the nectar of God's Eternal Divine Bliss. In the intensity of this emotion of Love, the devotee is not only unmindful of social and scriptural bindings and injunctions, he is even disrespectful and fearless towards them like the cowherd women of Vraja. Not only this, there is a persistent consciousness that all activity and spatio-temporal-relationship is an impediment in the service of the Lord whose Sport is an act of wonder and of supreme value. Though in the *puṣṭibhakti*, the devotee undertakes the performance of *śravana*, *kīrtana*, etc. yet his way and attitude is different from that of the *Maryādāmārga* where they are treated usually as a means. It is out of pure joy and excessive love that the *Puṣṭibhakta* takes to hearing of God's glory and Sports, singing His Divine name, etc., without considering them as a means to a further end.

The special feature of the *Puṣṭimārga* is the fact that in this philosophy of spiritual advancement the soul does not discard the functions of the various sense-organs. Instead, it utilises them in full — as we shall discuss in the next chapter — in his communion with God. A *puṣṭi-bhakta* never desires any reward from his Lord who Himself is usually unwilling to dispense with the fruits of *bhakti* lest it might impede the full achievement of the emotional intensity of separation because the state of separation wih the Lord is more generative of bliss than the state of union with Him. Another characteristic of the devotee of this path is his pitifulness and the sense of remorse at his incapability to experience the various other sports of the Lord even though he is in full vision of some of these *līlās*. The inculcation of the sense of remorse and pity in the devotee at his own condition is, for the Vallabhites, an important condition for the manifestation and appearance of the Lord. In separation, the continuous feeling of pitiable poverty at the failure of obtaining union with God is a reward in itself. The most fascinating and powerful aspect of this path of devotion is the attainment of a spiritual status in which the Lord is compelled to remember the devotee always with a feeling that he is

His. In such a situation God may bless him with whatever He wishes and not merely what is desired by the devotee as in the case of the devotee of the *Maryādā-mārga*. A king, when invited by his subject, in accordance with the rules of the land, to grace his house rewards him only with what is strictly permissible under such rules; yet, if he is pleased by the service and devotion of his subject he may bless him with any reward according to his own wish. Similarly, the Lord too, in dispensation of reward blesses the puṣṭi-devotee with whatever He likes, whereas, to the devotee of the Scriptural Path His generosity is never unbounded; the dispensation is strictly as per the principles of the Vedas. This is the reason why the *Puṣṭi-path* is considered to be supreme among all the various pathways to God.

Recapitulating we may assert, in a nut-shell, that the *Puṣṭi-mārga* is a new and unique path, basically different from all the three Vedic Paths of *Karma*, *Jñāna* and *Maryādābhakti*, where the object of devotion is the Nirguṇa Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. This path which is *nirguṇa* or transcendental, and not *saguṇa*, is fundamental, free, substantial and intrinsic[2]. It is substantial because it is independent of anything else as means; it is intrinsic as it is an end in itself. In this path *Bhakti* is both the means and attainment resting purely on the foundation of Pure Love. Notwithstanding the special characteristic of the *pure-puṣṭi-bhakti*, which is normally beyond the human reach, *puṣṭi-devotion*, in general, implies that the devotee should aspire only for the realization of God's real nature (*svarūpa*) and nothing else, not even salvation (*mokṣa*), and must endeavour to serve Him with love to obtain His Divine Grace.

Now the important question is : Who is eligible for this type of devotion? Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa replies this question by pointing out that[3] anyone who is actually interested in this path is eligible to it because such an interest is possible only by the blessings of the Lord. But how such an interest can be generated in a human soul is a question that requires a clear understanding of the Vallabhite concept of the nature and the genesis of *Bhakti* for which we propose to devote a full chapter in view of its importance and significance in the history of the Bhakti-movement in India.

1. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 93 to 117.
2. Bhatt, R.K. : *The Vedānta of Pure Non-Dualism*. p. 52.
3. Puṣṭimārgīyaphaladitsāsamudbhūtabhagavatkṛpājanyapuṣṭi mārga viṣayakarucimān adhikārī iti jñeyaṁ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 120).

CHAPTER XII

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF BHAKTI

(A) THE NATURE AND MEANING OF BHAKTI

Vallabha, as we have observed while undertaking an exposition of Bhaktimārga in the previous chapter, asserted the supremacy of *bhakti* over knowledge and action and averred with a rare depth of conviction that unswerving devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the only way to the achievement of Puruṣottama as declared by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself in the *Bhagavadgītā*[1] and the *Bhāgavata*[2]. The questions that naturally crop up in this regard are : What is meant by the term 'bhakti'? What is its nature and how can the flame of *bhakti* be ignited and set ablaze in the hearts of men? Is it always a means to the achievement of Puruṣottama or is there a possibility that it may serve as an end in itself? Answers to these questions are provided by Vallabha and his followers in the doctrine of *Bhakti*, both as *maryādā* and *puṣṭi* — treated at a considerable length — distinguishing it from the concepts of the other schools of Vaiṣṇavism and raising it to a high pedestal of glory and supremacy.

Meaning and concept of *'bhakti'*.

Etymologically, the term '*bhakti*', according to Vallabhites, is derived from the root '*bhaj*' by affixing it with '*ktin*' where '*bhaj*', out of some two dozen meanings, is contemplated to be employed in the sense of 'service'[3] (*sevā*). The use of the '*ktin*' as affix is intended to qualify the nature of this service. As '*ktin*' is a base (*pratyaya*) used for the formation of feminine abstract nouns, the sentiment of love naturally associated with womanhood forms the basis of this *pratyaya*. The use of '*ktin*', therefore, suggests that the concept of service or *sevā* in *bhakti* is always qualified by the emotion of love implying that *bhakti* invariably and basically stands

1. *Bhagavadgītā*, śloka (xi, 54)
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (xi, 14, 20)
3. Bhaj sevāyāṁ.

for a continuous and unobstructed service to God. As the sentiment of love is a mental mode, *bhakti* as service to God is always a mental phenomenon. As explained by Vallabha, in his *Siddhāntamuktāvalī*, 'service is the unbroken flow of mental activities towards Kṛṣṇa,'[1] because this kind of service alone is supreme; the others, that is, service through wealth and body, are meant only to create appropriate conditions for the proper development of this attitude. The term '*bhakti*' thus means the continuous and unbroken flow of the emotion of love towards the Deity on the analogy of the unobstructed flow of oil or the perennial flow of the river Ganges into the sea.

Vallabha on the nature and characteristics of *Bhakti*.

Vallabha, at many places in his *Aṇubhāṣya* and *Tattvadīpanibandha*, defines '*bhakti*' as the excellence[2] of unswerving emotion of love towards God with a perfect knowledge of His Glory and greatness (*māhātmya-jñāna*). As laid down by him, three conditions are essential for the recognition[3] of a loving emotion as *bhakti*; firstly, it should be directed towards either the Supreme personality of Godhead-Kṛṣṇa-or towards any of His Descents (Avatāras), secondly, the devotee must possess a complete knowledge of His Glory and Greatness as the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world-order, etc.- for which alone the *Brahmasūtras* have been composed by Vyāsa- and, thirdly, the emotion of love must be so profound and intense that it should become almost a kind of obsession (*vyasana*) to him. Such an emotion of love with an attitude of service towards God, with a sense not only of His Divine Glory but also of His identity with the devotee's self, is the real meaning and the import of the term '*bhakti*'. In its manifestation the devotional emotion is not only conscious of the various Divine Excellences (*bhagas*) but also has the realization that God, as the Ultimate Reality, is non-different from the devotee's own self. This consciousness of identity with the Personality of Godhead raises the intensity of love to its acme — because, as demonstrated in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, a man loves his self the most — and reveals the character and attribute of God as the object of love (*priyatva*) in its perfection (this being one of the Lord's several excellences). According

1. *Siddhāntamuktāvalī*, ślokas 1 & 2.
2. Eṣa bhaktiḥ māhātmyajñānapūrvakaparamasneḥarūpaḥ.
   (*T.D.N. Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa* with *Prakāśa*, p. 288)
3. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 42 with *Prakāśa*.

to Vallabha, the real purpose of such Upaniṣadic texts as '*Tat tvaṁ asi*' is to inculcate the sense and idea of this identity between the soul [1] and God, as between the effect and its material-cause, so that this emotion of love towards Him, as the self of one's being, may be so intensified as to reach the high pitch of *sarvātmabhāva* or *nirodha* which is the real state of *bhakti*. It is this state of devotion, called primary-devotion (*mukhya-bhakti*) which is defined as 'transcendental love towards God' by Śāndilya in his *Bhaktisūtra* [2] and such other theoreticians of the Bhakti-cult as Nārada.

Devotion–Primary and Secondary.

Though, as it is obvious, love is the foundation, the essence and the motivating force at the back of devotion, its manifestation is gradational and different in the different individual souls. To some—who are chosen by God in His Divine Grace — it is spontaneous without needing any means or preparatory requirement (the *puṣṭi*-souls), to others, under the influence of the saints and scriptural teachings, its acquisition is after undergoing a long spell of the performance of such various means as the *niṣkāma-karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, the nine-disciplined-devotion etc. (the *puṣṭi-maryādā*-souls). *Bhakti* is, therefore, classified as primary (*mukhya*) and secondary (*amukhya*) or as *vihita* (depending on scriptural injunctions) and *avihita* (independent of scriptural injunctions); but to Vallabha and his followers it is the primary one, the one independent of Scriptures and drawing its strength from Lord's Grace itself — the devotion of the *Puṣṭimārga* — that alone has the claim to be called *bhakti* in its true and perfect sense. Though a devotee of the *Maryādāmārga* may also reach the high acme of transcendental emotional love towards God, yet, because his reward is only union with Puruṣottama and not *alaukika-sāmarthya* or participation in His Divine Sport, it is inferior in character to the *bhakti* of the *puṣṭi* type. Notwithstanding Śrī Vallabha's recognition of *maryādā-bhakti,* he and his followers are always inclined to favour the *puṣṭi* type as the supreme variety leading to the full manifestation of Puruṣottama's Delight, rendering it as an end in itself, and not as a means to *mokṣa* as in the *maryādā-path*. The Vallabhites, therefore, declare that the real purport and meaning of the term '*bhakti*' is the transcendental, devotional love of the *puṣṭi*-variety towards the Original, *Nirguṇa* Status

Primary devotion, the real import of *Bhakti*.

1. *T.D.N. Śāstrārthaprakaraṇa*, kārikā 41.
2. Sā parānuraktirīśvare. (*Bhaktisūtra*, sūtra, 1, 1, 2).

of Being of the Lord or Kṛṣṇa and all other manifestations of *bhakti* are inferior to it.

Other meanings of '*bhakti*'.

In the Indian devotional tradition as well as the different Scriptures, the term '*bhakti*' is also used in senses other than the one described above. It is employed to be comprehended in such senses as knowledge (*jñāna*), action (*kriyā*), faith (*śraddhā*), worship (*upāsanā*), ritualistic adoration (*pūjā*), repetition of God's name (*japa*) and giving alms (*dāna*). How can, then, the term '*bhakti*' be construed only in the strict Vallabhite sense as described above? Śrī Viṭṭhalanātha vigorously argued, in his *Bhakti-haṁsa*, that none of these prevalent meanings is the real import of '*bhakti*' which is recognised as the ultimate instrument of salvation and God-attainment in the śrutis and the *Bhagavadgītā*. It is illogical to identify '*bhakti*' with knowledge (*jñāna*). as done by some thinkers, because *Gītā* and other scriptures while emphasising the supremacy of '*bhakti*' over '*jñāna*' tacitly [1] imply their difference. To imagine *bhakti* as some sort of 'activity' (*kriyā*), is also irrelevant because such theoreticians as Śāṇḍilya [2] are emphatic that devotion is unattainable by human effort. It is only God's Grace that is instrumental in the manifestation of the emotion of devotion in a man's heart and not the individual effort or action in this direction. *Bhakti* is never the result of any activity. Would it, then, be proper to identify it with faith (*śraddhā*) specially when the utility of faith is unequivocally recognised even by the *Bhāgavata*? The Vallabhites reply this question by asserting that though 'faith' is a common universal condition in almost every spiritual discipline, including *bhakti*, it would be specious to identify it with 'devotion'. Faith, as the *Gītā* contends, is only a part of *bhakti* and not *bhakti* in toto.

Real *bhakti* different from knowledge, action, faith, worship etc.

The question whether *bhakti* is identical with *upāsanā* (worship) or *pūja* (ritualistic adoration) is important in as much as many of the masters of Vaiṣṇavite tradition, like Rāmānuja and Madhva, were satisfied in using the term '*bhakti*' as a synonym of *upāsanā*, which to them, is the only means for the attainment of *mokṣa*. The concept of *upāsanā*, as available in the Vedic and Āgamika literature, reveals,

Refutation of the idea that '*bhakti*' is '*upāsanā*'.

1. Śāndilya : *Bhakti-sūtra*, sūtra (1, 1, 9).
2. *Ibid*, sūtra (1, 1, 7) with Muralidharadāsa's commentary.

specifically, its two fundamental conditions. Firstly, every *upāsanā* or *pūja* is *sakāma*, i.e., it has always some end in view; it may be worldly attainment, heaven or *mokṣa* (as in the case of *akṣaropāsanā*). Secondly, it involves some kind of human activity in accordance with scriptural injunctions. The Deity in such forms of worship, including *mantropāsanā*, is always an object. This nature of the Deity is fundamentally in opposition with the essential nature of Puruṣottama, who, as Viṭṭhalanātha avers in unmistakable terms, is unrelated with any action-oriented injunction or *upāsanā*. The essence of Puruṣottama, being the foundational Reality of all existence, is always eternal; it is never realizable through *Yajña* or *Upāsanā* like such Deities as Indra. Though God or Puruṣottama is an object of devotion, the Vallabhites are emphatic in their stand that Puruṣottama, in His Original Status of Being, is never the object of *upāsanā*. The object of every *upāsanā* and the predicate of every injunction relating to worship is always a Deity which is an emanation or manifestation of Brahman or Puruṣottama (*vibhūtirūpa*); the object of even *mantropāsanā* or initiation (*dikṣā*), whether in accordance with the Vedas or the Pāñcarātra Āgamas, is always an emanation (*vibhūti*) of Puruṣottama and not Puruṣottama in His fundamental Being (*mūlarūpa*). Now, because *bhakti* is a means to the attainment of Puruṣottama, it is certainly different from *upāsanā* whose Deity is an emanation or part (*aṁśa*) of Puruṣottama, the Ultimate Reality. In its very nature devotion is different from worship because, whereas, worship aims to please a specific Deity for the attainment of some end, the end of *bhakti* (devotion) is always the realization of the true nature of Puruṣottama and participation in His Divine Sport. *Bhakti*, by nature, is always unconditioned and any lapse, for any reason, in its performance is never productive of any harm; *upāsanā* or worship, on the other hand, being *sakāma* always does some harm if there is the slightest flaw in its performance. It is, therefore, fallacious and irrelevant to assert that *bhakti* and *upāsanā* are synonymous. Similarly, any identification of *bhakti* with the adoration of Brahman as part of a sacrificial-ritual is also illogical.

A very pertinent question may, however, be asked : When in the nine-disciplines of *bhakti, archanaṁ* or adoration finds a place, how are the Vallabhites reasonable in discarding its identity with *bhakti*? Viṭṭhalanātha refutes this contention by arguing that it is wrong to imagine that the character of nine-disciplined devotion (*navadhābhakti*) is identical for all devotees irrespective of their mental

qualifications [1] and eligibility (*adhikāra*). There are many different varieties of the nine-disciplined devotion in accordance with the nature and temperament of the devotees. The nine-disciplined [2] devotion when adopted as a means for the attainment of the three ends, viz., *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* is a part of the Path of Works, whereas, its performance with the specific purpose of purifying the *antaḥkaraṇa* for the attainment of knowledge is an aspect of the Path of Knowledge (*jñānamārgīya*). On the other hand, when one undertakes the performance of nine-stepped devotion (*navadhābhakti*) after initiation into the *Pāñcarātra-religion* for the attainment of *mokṣa*, even without knowledge, the character of this nine-disciplined devotion is said to belong to the path of Upāsanā (*upāsanāmārgīya*) technically called the '*Vaiṣṇava-mārga*'. Again, there are certain devotees who after getting proper initiation into the Bhakti-cult of the *Maryādamārga* — as that of Rāmānuja — vigorously perform *śravaṇa* etc. of the nine-pronged discipline as a means to liberation; such performance is termed as '*Pravāhikī-bhakti*' [3]: However, when, in the Path of Devotion (*Bhaktimārga*) the nine-disciplined devotion is employed as a means to the generation of *Premālakṣaṇa-bhakti* (devotion having love as its essence) it is technically termed as '*maryādā-bhakti*'. This *bhakti* always serves as an instrument to the attainment of the supreme variety of Devotion having love of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as its essence and verily an end in itself. The Vallabhites, therefore, argue that the usage of the term '*bhakti*' for either *arcanaṁ* (*pūja*) or the whole of the nine-disciplined devotion is only figurative and secondary and not primary because the primary usage of this term is restricted only to the supreme form of Devotion, the Devotion with love or the *Puṣṭi-bhakti*. The Vallabhites, therefore, classify *bhakti* as *mukhya* (primary) and *amukhya* or *gauṇa* (secondary); the primary stands for *Puṣṭi-bhakti*, an end and ideal in itself, whereas, the secondary, including the nine- disciplined-*bhakti*, is utilised as a means for the gradual attainment of the Primary Devotion.

Puṣṭi-bhakti is real *Bhakti.*

1. Bhatta, R.K. : *Veṇugītaṁ* (Hindi), p. 3.
2. *Bhaktihaṁsa*, p. 40.
3. The difference between '*pravāhikī-bhakti*' and '*upāsanā-bhakti*' consists only in the fact that whereas '*pravāhikī-bhakti*' follows the masters of the *Maryādāmārga*, the nine-disciplined *bhakti* of the *Upāsanāmārga* is related to *Pāñcarātra* initiation.

(B) THE DOCTRINE OF PUṢṬI-BHAKTI

The Nature of *Puṣṭi-bhakti.*

Though the special features of *Puṣṭi-bhakti* have already been explained by us during our exposition of *Śuddha-puṣṭi* in the preceding chapter, we endeavour to explain some of its basic and essential characteristics in order to bring home to the readers the very nature and idea of the Vallabhite philosophy of Devotion in its fullness and totality. The theology of Devotion as a means to the attainment of Puruṣottama is no less important for chartering the course of man's spiritual uplift than the exposition of the character of *bhakti* as an end and an ideal. In actual practice, as per the dictates of the *Bhāgavata*, an aspirant has to perform the nine-disciplines of *navadhābhakti* till he reaches the last stage of self-surrender (*ātmanivedanaṁ*) to the Lord. This state of self-surrender, the last leg of *navadhābhakti*, generates love towards God in such profusion that he acquires such a state of mental obsession that all his bodily functions and activities are directed only towards Him. On acquiring this state, the devotee hears the glory of the Lord, chants and sings His Divine name and performs all other disciplines not with a consciousness that they are the means but with an inborn impulse of love. Till one reaches this state of the intensity of love towards God or Kṛṣṇa the performance of the *sādhanā* or the *maryādābhakti* is a necessity. But once the devotee is fully established in the love of God, all his God-oriented activities and mentality is almost natural and spontaneous. It is why the *Bhāgavata* contends 'that *Bhakti* is produced by *bhakti*' meaning thereby that the primary *premalakṣaṇā-bhakti* is an outcome of the *maryādābhakti* or the devotion with its nine-disciplines. The *Puṣṭi-mārga* of Vallabha, therefore, recognises the two aspects of *Bhakti*, namely the *maryādā* or *miśrapuṣṭi-bhakti*, employed as a means, and *puṣṭi-puṣṭi-bhakti* which is an end and an ideal in itself. Both of these are always the results of Lord's Divine Grace. Whomsoever the Lord inducts in His *maryādāpuṣṭi* takes either to the *pure-maryādāmārga* or the path of *maryādāpuṣṭi* [1] and those whom He selects specially for His *pure-puṣṭi*

1. There is a subtle difference between Pure *Maryādābhakti* and *Puṣṭi-maryādā*. When after initiation into the Puṣṭi-cult, the aspirant, after the self-surrender ceremony, undertakes the path of devotion with all its means, it is called *Puṣṭi-maryādā*. But till one is not initiated into the ritual of *Brahmasaṁbandha* the performance of all such means, as knowledge, yoga, nine-disciplined devotion etc. which may lead to the *puṣṭi-bhakti* are technically called the '*Maryādāmārga*'.

obtain His *bhakti* without any means or *sādhanā*. His Grace irrespective of any means is *puṣṭi* whereas, His grace involving the means [1] is known as *maryāda*.

Characteristics of *Puṣṭi-bhakti*.

It is thus obvious that the only determinant of *bhakti* in Vallabha's *Puṣṭi mārga* is Love towards the Puruṣottama aspect of Brahman or Kṛṣṇa. This love, therefore, is unconditioned (*nirupādhika*) because it is directed towards His Original Status of Being and not towards His Descents [2] or *Avatāras* in which case the *bhakti* becomes conditioned (*sopādhika*). As remarked by Lord Kapila in the *Bhāgavata*, the nature of *bhakti* is *nirguṇa* or transcendental, it is without any reason (*ahaitukī*) and is unimpeded. The real nature of *bhakti*, according to the *Bhāgavata* as well as Vallabha, is that it is directed towards Puruṣottama, is an end in itself, never a means to some other end, involves a continuous unbreakable stream of loving emotion and consciousness (*avyavahita*) and is constituted by Delight.

As already expressed in the previous chapter, Vallabha, on the footprints of the *Bhāgavata*, stressed that *Puṣṭibhakti* which is fundamental, free and intrinsic is *nirguṇa* or transcendental since it is directed towards Kṛṣṇa, the Transcendental (*nirguṇa*) Supreme Personality of Godhead. To quote the words of the *Bhāgavata*, "Just as the current of the sacred river Ganges constantly flows towards the ocean, after piercing through the obstacles of even the mountains due to its irresistible flow, the unrestrained constant mental flow towards Me, caused by hearing my qualities and unmitigated by the limitations of the world and the Vedas is called the eternal path of Nirguṇa Devotion." [3] This aspect of devotion is different from the *saguṇa-bhakti* in which the different Descents or *Avatāras* of Lord Kṛṣṇa such as Rāma, Nṛsiṁgha etc., as well as different gods and goddesses alone are worshipped. Vallabha is always emphatic on the point that the foremost and probably the only duty of man is to devote himself completely [4], with full mental absorption, to Lord Kṛṣṇa and to none else. If this is achieved, all the mundane and Vedic rewards fall into insignificance.

1. Niḥsādhanānugraha puṣṭiḥ, sādhanānugraho maryādā.
2. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (3, 3, 3). p. 999.
3. Bhatt, R.K. : The Vedānta of Pure Non-Dualism.
4. *Catuḥślokī*, ślokas 1 and 3.

Though these characteristics are equally present in both *puṣṭi* and *maryādā* types of *bhakti* what distinguishes the former from the latter is the fact that whereas the *maryādā* form of devotion is a means to the attainment of *mokṣa* and immortality, the former, i.e., the *puṣṭi* is an end in itself having participation in the Divine Sport as its rightful reward. This is why Lord Kṛṣṇa remarks in the *Bhāgavata* that such devotees discard all the four types of *mukti* even if provided to them. The *Puṣṭibhakti* is, therefore, contemplated as the fifth and the supreme Ideal or *puruṣārtha*. As this *bhakti* is independent of scriptural tradition depending solely on God's Grace, it is called Free or Svatantra. Herein it is God who with His Grace receives the soul; it is not the soul that receives God. The superiority of this type of *bhakti* is expressed by the Vallabhites when they remark that the followers of the *puṣṭi-bhakti* always meditate upon the lotus-face of the Lord as against those of the *maryādā-bhakti* who always have His lotus feet as the object of their meditation.

(C) THE PSYCHOLOGICAL GENESIS OF BHAKTI

To these very rare *puṣṭi-souls*, who are the recipients of The Lord's special Grace, the manifestation of devotional love may be intrinsic, inborn and spontaneous, yet for a large number of God-realised saints the manifestation of devotion is mostly a gradational development leading to the high acme of the Supreme Devotion towards God. From a pragmatic standpoint the most important question is : How a soul interested in the path of *Bhakti* should tread his way so as to reach the high point of devotional attainment? In other words, what is the genesis and development of the sentiment of devotion? Śrī Vallabha and his followers have, in answering this question, developed a full theory of devotional psychology providing us with a thorough account, as far as possible, of the supreme devotional emotion manifesting its spiritual value in all its depth.

Interest (*ruci*).

We have already observed in the preceding chapter that *ruci* (interest) in the path of devotion, is the sign of the soul's eligibility to the *puṣṭimārga*. How is this interest created? Bālakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa contends in his *Prameyaratnārṇava* [1] that the divine souls whom the Lord wishes to admit in the *puṣṭi-path* by His Grace get company of devoted saints

1. *Bhagavata*, śloka (2, 8, 5-6).

and the opportunity to serve them. During the course of this company, they hear from them about the Lord's glory and the magnificient tales of His Divine dalliances. He also gets the opportunity to serve these saints with his body and soul. As a result of the company of the spiritual saints — an unfailing instrument in spiritual uplift — the human soul is so purified that it develops a kind of interest in the religion of the *bhagavatas*. When the soul in which this interest has been created resorts further to the performance of hearing, singing, etc., his *citta* (internal-organ) is purified by his spiritual aborption and relationship with the result that he is even more deeply involved in hearing and singing His name. As explained in the *Bhāgavata*, "Lord Kṛṣṇa through their ears enters and sits over the lotus heart of His devotees and destroys the impurities of their hearts just as the autumn removes all the impurities of water. The purified soul never leaves the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa."[1] yet in this state of the devotee the interest (*ruci*) generated is only mediate (*parokṣa*) and not immediate (*aparoksa*) because he has as yet no direct and immediate experience of the Lord. As The basis, and the cause of this interest is the *Śravaṇa* (hearing) of God's glory and magnificence and the company of saints, and not the immediate perception of God, it is called Meḍiate Interest and is just the first stage in development.

Mediate interest – first stage.

As explained by Vallabha in his *Bhakti-vardhini*, every individual-soul at the time of its emanation contains the seed of devotion laying concealed in a very subtle form. When the soul possessing this seed of devotion happens to acquire mediate interest in God, as explained above, he by dint of hearing and singing of God's name and glory develops this interest to such an extent that God manifests Himself in his heart, subsequent to this Divine manifestation the very nature and character of the devotee's interest (*ruci*) is transformed; The cause and the basis of his interest is no more mediate but interest is no more mediate but the immediate experience of the Lord's manifestation. This sublime stage of interest termed as 'immediate interest' (*aparokṣa-ruci*) is really the cause of the development and manifestation of the seed of devotion,[1] by the performance of nine-disciplined *bhakti* and renunciation, into a full blown emotion of love (*prema*)[2]

The state of love (*prema*)

1. *Bhaktivardhinī*, kārikā, 1.
2. *Prameyaratnarṇava*, p. 123.

which is the basis and the fundamental condition of all devotional approaches to God. When the individual-soul acquires this state of love he is deprived of all attachements towards worldly objects. His sole object of attachment is God or Kṛṣṇa. Love may, therefore, be defined as a sentiment (*bhāva*) that removes all attachments other than the one related to God.

The State of Attachment (*āsakti*).

When the soul attains this emotional state of love, his interest in God and His acts (during His manifestation as a Descent) is so intense and powerful that he is always engrossed in hearing and singing about Him. His love towards God develops and enters a state of deep-attachment [1] towards Him. This state of attachment (*āsakti*) is a higher state of love. When a devotee attains to this mental and spiritual state he feels that all worldly objects, even the home, are impediments in his emotional approach to God. Attachment or *āsakti* may, therefore, be defined as a mental and spiritual state in which all mundane objects are revealed as contradictory to a proper loving [2] approach to God. Moving further on this pathway to God, the devotee reaches such a state of total absorption in God that he is in a sort of mad obsession. This state of obsession or *vyasana*, as it is called, is the most advanced state of the emotion of love wherein the mind of the devotee flows towards Him unimpeded on the analogy of the unbroken flow of oil. During this state it is impossible for the devotee to exist even for a moment without God. The *vyasana* or obsessive attachment here is not either towards the sports or the attributes of God but towards the very *svarūpa* (nature) of God. The object of this *vyasana* is, therefore, God Himself. The sentiment of *vyasana* has, therefore, been defined as the emotion in which the agent is unable to subsist without the vision of the object. It is this which is referred by Vallabha as *mānasī-seva* (mental service) to Kṛṣṇa, the supreme ideal of human duty and by Śāṇḍilya as 'transcendental love' towards God. *Vyasana* is actually the state of *Sarvātmabhāva*, the highest ideal of human achievement, in whose realization the devotee acquires the fullness of delight and satisfaction. "When one attains to the state of obsession with Kṛṣṇa, he attains the *summum bonum* of his life." [3]

The State of Obsession (*vyasana*)

1. *Bhaktivardhinī*, kārikā, 4.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid*, Śloka 5.

The intensity of the feeling of separation [1] from God, in this state, is so acute that the devotee is almost on the verge of death. So God, in all His kindness, enters into his heart, like fire in wood, in order to maintain his life, providing him with the Highest Reward, the union with his Supreme Beloved wherein the psychoses of his mind get dissolved for ever in Him to provide him with a state of intense meditation or *samādhi*. For such obsessed-devotees, Vallabha recommends the life of renunciation as living in world would no more be adjustable with their specific spiritual condition and the frame of mind. [2]

It is thus apparent that the Vallabhite theory of devotion as love is comprised of three stages : the first is the stage of love (*prema*), the second is the stage of *vyasana* which is identified with *sarvātmabhāva*. Till this last stage is achieved, Vallabhism enjoins the utility of the performance of the nine-disciplined devotion as a means but after attaining this state the means are no more necessary because the devotee has already reached the supreme state of love towards all as the manifestations of Divinity. The real and the supreme reward, the *alaukikasāmarthya*, is obtained only when the devotee is well established in the state of *vyasana*.

Spiritual experience during *vyasana*.

The devotee's spiritual experience during the state of *vyasana* is so varied and comprehensive that in its gradational uplift it has been marked by several prominent stages, the most notable of which are the states of *Nirodha* (Constraint) and the *Sarvātmabhāva*.

Nirodha and *Sarvātmabhāva*.

Constraint or *Nirodha* is a well-advanced state of *Vyasana* (obsession) and *Sarvātmabhāva* is the high climax of Constraint with the full manifestation and unfolding of Delight by the Lord. As the concepts of *Nirodha* and *Sarvātmabhāva* are highly technical it may not be improper to discuss them at some length in order to express their full meaning and significance.

(D) THE DOCTRINE OF *NIRODHA* (CONSTRAINT)

The concept of *Nirodha*, which is the subject-matter of the Tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata* is the 'central soteriological doctrine of Vallabha's system'. Etymologically, the term '*nirodha*' stands for the

1. Bhatta, R.K. : *Veṇugītaṁ* (Hindi), p. 10.
2. *Bhaktivardhinī*, śloka 6.

Nature and concept of *Nirodha*.

total oblivion of the world-order (*prapañca*) caused by the enticing charm of Kṛṣṇa's Sports which He undertakes for the salvation of His devotees by descending on this earth and thus causing a *constraint* on the Infinity of His Being. The salvific intent of Kṛṣṇa constraints Him to descend on this earth in a human form with the specific purpose of providing salvation to his chosen ones through His Divine Games. The term '*nirodha*', therefore, stands to mean, firstly, the descent of Kṛṣṇa with all His powers and His Games in the world and, secondly, for the devotee, the intensity of his emotional attachment to the Lord and His Games that makes him totally oblivious of the world and its enticements. These two interpretations of Constraint are so inter-related that it is impossible to think of the one without the other. As observed by Mr. Reddington, "So, the other side of the coin is the devotee who is the object of Kṛṣṇa's constraining action. Kṛṣṇa constraints Himself in order to bring about in the devotee one necessary negative effect, 'forgetting of the world' (*prapañcavismṛti*) and one positive effect, 'passionate attachment of the Blessed Lord' (*bhagavadāśakti*), Kṛṣṇa constraints Himself so that the devotee become constrained away from the world to Him alone. The force of Kṛṣṇa's Grace charms the devotee away from all else."[1]

Difference from the concept of '*nirodha*' in Yoga and *Jñāna-mārga*.

It is quite obvious that the character of this Constraint belonging to the path of Devotion is fundamentally different from the 'constraint' followed either by the *yogins* or by the followers of the Path of Knowledge in as much as they deliberately 'constraint their senses and other faculties away from the world as an integral part of their spiritual path'. The devotees of the *Bhakti-mārga*, on the other hand, have no sense of inhibition against the world and its objects, its feelings and emotions; rather they base their spiritual approach on these mundane emotions themselves, convinced as they are that the reason of degradation lies not in the emotions themselves but in the character of their objects. The Grace and Charm of Kṛṣṇa and His Sports is so puissant and attractive that the devotee in his attachment of love forgets all about the world, its enticements, its commands of morality, etc., and is lost in the loving blissful meditation

3. James, D. Reddington, S.J. : *Vallabhācārya on the Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 36.

of the Lord. The state of Constraint, therefore, is a state of immense delight caused by the Games of the Lord and not merely a condition of negative mental control marked by the absence of delight. It is a fully developed and advanced stage of *vyasana*.

It may, however, be remembered that the basic conception of the Doctrine of Constraint of the *Puṣṭi-mārga* is that the Lord Himself serves as the means to the spiritual uplift of His devotees by destroying their nescience through the force of His own Personality and His Sports. Here, the devotees are unable either by their own nature or by dint of circumstances to resort to such means of attainment as are undertaken by the followers of the *Maryādāmārga*. It is Kṛṣṇa's responsibility to divert the attention, emotions and love of the devotees towards Himself because they possess no means.

Tāmasika devotee.

In actual provision of Constraint of His devotees through His Games, the Lord is always considerate of their intrinsic mental qualities, whether they are *sāttvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*, and designs and manipulates His Games accordingly. For the benefit of the devotees of the *tāmasika* mental qualities and propensities like the Gopis of the Vraja He undertakes such sports as are narrated in the *Tāmas Prakaraṇa*; to the devotees of the *rājasika* and the *sāttvika* bent of mind He provides a different set of sports, as are detailed in the *Bhagavata* the attributes of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, as we know, stand for light (including goodness, knowledge, subtlety, purity etc.), activity (including extroversion, initiative, kingly virtues, passion, confusion etc.) and darkness (signifying dullness, ignorance, inertia, stubbornness, wilfulness and impudence [1]); as such the devotees who have the predominance of the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are known as the *sāttvika*, the *rājasika* and the *tāmasika*.

The implications of the concept of '*tamas*'.

Though the mental and spiritual framework of the *sāttvika* and *rājasika* personalities is superior to that of the *tāmasika* ones, the *Bhāgavata* attaches considerable importance to the *tāmasika* devotees because their mental outlook and approach is more conducive to the *puṣṭi-path*; the Gopis, who are acknowledged to be the true masters of the *puṣṭi-mārga*, are the representative examples of the *tāmasika-type*. The term '*tamas*', as applicable to the residents of the Vraja, is, according to *Prameyaratnārṇava*, used with three different meanings. The first usage which is technical (*pāribhāsika*) implies 'that it is the means of attaining the experience of the mood of non-scriptural

1. *Ibid*, p. 45.

devotion'[1], 'devotion that is not described in the scriptures, but is given purely by Kṛṣṇa's[2] Grace'. Such devotees have special liking for those Games of the Blessed Lord which are similar to those of this world and are according to their desire. "These devotees are interested in doing their will and doing everything the way they like, rather than in following the Lord's will and pleasure which is a characteristic of the *sāttvika* devotees."[3] "The *tāmasika* devotees are filled with impertinence; they become bereft of knowledge and deluded, and precisely because they are bereft of knowledge they transgress the laws of the world and the commands of the Vedas."[4] The second usage of the word '*tamas*' strictly adheres to the implication that it is a 'personality-trait' caused by the predominance of the *tamas*-attribute resulting in certain particular emotions. As elaborated by Mr. Redington, "a *tāmasika* type is characterised by a sort of 'aggressive-nastiness', a *rājasika*-type by 'agitated confusion' and a *sāttvika* type' by firm knowledge."[5] The third usage of the term '*tamasa*' implies that it is an effect of the Māyā[6] of the Lord. Due to this *Māyā*, the *tāmasika* devotees are not only, by nature, attached to their homes, their families and their belongings but they, at times, are even forgetful of the Lord and very often subscribe these *māyika* qualities to the Lord Himself. The Lord by His Grace destroys this *Māyā* through His successive Games after which these *tāmasika* devotees attain to *rājasika* and then to *sāttvika* qualities and ultimately attain the state of transcendence (*nirguṇāvasthā*) after the destruction of the *sāttvika* trait. Vallabha's interpretation that Pūtanā[7] stands for *avidyā*, Dhenuka[8] symbolises the superimposition of the body (*dehādhyāsa*), the serpent Kālīya[9] means the sense-organs and its poison stands

Spiritual uplift and destruction of Nescience caused by Kṛṣṇa.

1. Avihitabhaktirasānubhavasādhanarūpaṁ pāribhāṣikaṁ. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 164.)
2. James D. Reddington, S.J. : *Vallabhācārya on The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 19.
3. *Ibid*, p. 20.
4. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 164, and *Vallabhācārya on The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 20.
5. *Vallabhācārya on The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 46, and *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 166.
6. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 166.
7. Avidyā pūtanā naṣṭā. (*Subodhinī* on śloka X, 6, 14, 1).
8. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 186.
9. Kālīya indriyāṇyāhuḥ viṣayāḥ tadviṣaṁ mataṁ. (*Subodhinī* on śloka x, 15, 1, 4 to 5).

for the enticing objects of the world — all of which were destroyed by Kṛṣṇa during His Sports — is a mythological explanation of the basic *Bhāgavata* and Vallabhite philosophy that in providing spiritual progress to the *puṣṭi*-devotee the Lord invariably destroys all the facets of his nescience. By virtue of their attachment towards Him, the devotees after obtaining the pure state of transcendence acquire *Brahmabhāva* (Brahman-realization) and become eligible to entry into His Divine and Eternal Sports. The Doctrine of Constraint, as explicated in the Tenth Skandha of the *Bhāgavata* invariably implies that by dint of his excessive attachment and love, in the form of obsession, to the Lord, the devotee simply by His Grace is raised to the Supreme Spiritual State, technically termed '*Sarvātmabhāva*'.

Relevance of *Nirodha* in modern times.

A very pertinent question, in this regard, may, however, be asked : What is the implication of Kṛṣṇa's Games for the modern man? How is the *puṣṭi-devotee*, in modern times, to follow the path of Constraint in the absence of the Lord, in the form of Kṛṣṇāvatāra (Kṛṣṇa Descent), and His Games? The Vallabhites solve this problem by contending that because the Lord is Omnipresent and Omnipotent He is ever engaged in his *Nirodhalīlā* for the benefit of the *puṣṭi-devotees*. To those who are engaged in the loving service of God after the initiation — ceremony of *Brahma-saṁbandha* [1] and total surrender (*ātmanivedana*) the Lord gradually removes all the defects born out of their *tāmasika,* [2] *rājasika* and *sāttvika* attributes and raises them to the spiritual status of pure transcendence (*nirguṇatva*). It is not only important but necessary to realize that all the rewards related to the different Games of Kṛṣṇa, as elaborately explicated in the Tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata,* [3] are provided to the modern devotee also, the only difference being that in modern times the manifestation of the Lord and His Games is always in the devotee's heart. While meditating upon the lotusfeet of the Lord, the devotee is blessed with His Divine Grace and manifestation, both externally and internally, in his heart resulting in utmost intensity of attachment to Him and the consequent forgetfulness of world and its objects — the situation of *Nirodha* or

1. *Siddhāntarahasya*, kārikās 2 and 3.
2. Bhagavaduktasevāśravaṇādisādhanairbījadārḍhye sati sevayaiva krameṇa tamorajaḥsatvāni nivartante. (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 179).
3. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, Chapter VII.

Constraint. The Lord's Games causing restraint or control (*nirodha*) are as relevant to a devotee of *Puṣṭimārga* in modern times as they were to the men and women of Vraja.

(E) THE THEORY OF *SARVĀTMABHĀVA*

As observed by Sri R. Kaladhar Bhatta, "*Sarvātmabhāva* is a technical term intended to reveal the right meaning of *vyasananirodha* (obsession and constraint). In *Sarvātmabhāva* there is an experience of unconditioned delight of devotion. Viewing in right perspective, the state of Constraint is the fully developed state of obsession whereas *Sarvātmabhāva* is the culmination of the state of Constraint described in the Upaniṣads by the mantra 'He is delight'."[1] To Vallabha it is a state of supreme spiritual experience of Love and Delight identified with the state of *Bhūmā* described in the Nārada-Sanatkumāra Dialogue of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* as the supreme human attainment of Wisdom and Delight. The *Bhāgavata* is unambiguous in its glorification of this state when it makes Uddhava tell the Gopies, "O! Blessed Ones! You who have attained *Sarvātmabhāva* in the Lord Adhokṣaja have done a great favour to me."[2]

The Meaning.

What is the exact connotation of the term '*Sarvātmabhāva*' in Vallabhism and why is it claimed to be the supreme form of devotion and the ultimate[3] reason for the attainment of Puruṣottama? In the vast Vallabhite literature dealing with this topic two different interpretations of this term, though complementary, are available. According to the first interpretation, the compound '*sarvātmabhāva*' is resolved as '*sarvair* (*meaning indriyādibhiḥ*) ātmano (*bhagavati*) *bhāvaḥ*' meaning "the love of Ātman or God with all the senses, motor-organs, life-breath, mind, heart and understanding". The word '*bhāva*' is used not in the ordinary general sense of emotion but with the specific meaning as 'love towards God, the teacher or the elder'. The term '*ātma-bhāva*' (resolved as '*ātmanobhāva*') too is specialised as it communicates a deeper meaning associated with the term 'Ātman'. As emphatically asserted by

Love of God with all senses etc.

1. Bhatta, R.K. : *Veṇugītaṁ* (Hindi), p. 10.
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (X, 47, 27).
3. Puruṣottamalābhe yo mukhyahetutayoditaḥ,
   Tasya sarvātmabhāvasya svarūpamihavarṇyate.
   (*Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 144).

Yājñavalkya in *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*,[1] Ātman is the dearest of all because all things in the world are dear not for themselves but for the Self. Thus the Ātman is the central point of all love. The term '*ātmabhāva*', therefore, implies an unconditioned (*nirupādhi*) pure love towards God or Kṛṣṇa, The term '*sarvātmabhāva*' therefore, means, according to Vallabha and his followers, the unconditioned pure love of God with the involvement of all the sense and motor organs and the different varieties of mental psychoses (*vṛttis* of *antaḥkaraṇa*). As the Vallabhites explain, this love of God and the desire to be in His communion (*bhagavatbhāva*) is not only to partake His Divine Delight with one particular sense-organ but with the maximum number of the senses and motor organs possible. The *Bhāgavata* elaborates this concept when it mentions, "He (*Ambarīṣa*) directed his mind to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, his speech to describing the glories of *Vaikuṇṭha*, his hands to the sweeping and cleaning of Hari's temple, his ears to hearing the sacred stories about Acyuta, his eyes to seeing the places where Mukunda's image dwells, his bodily contact to touching the limbs of the Lord's servants, his nose to the fragrance of blessed Tulasi on Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, his tongue to the food offered to the Lord, his feet to travelling to Hari's sacred places, his hand to reverencing Hṛṣīkeśa's feet and his passion to service without any indulgence of lust — a love like that which characterises Uttamaśloka's own people."[2] This is a description of Total Love of *Sarvātmabhāva* at the *sādhana*-state where the supreme aspect of devotion is resorted to as a means. However, when it is an end in itself, there too the functional utility of all the senses and motor-organs and the *vṛttis* of *antaḥkaraṇa* is emphasised as a necessary condition. In the Tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata*, the Gopis, while describing Kṛṣṇa as the reward of everything, elaborate : "Conversing with the Blessed Lord, seeing Him, embracing Him when we meet him, as well as worshipping Him and in that way touching Him; kissing the nectar of His lips, enjoying Him sexually and the thrilling of the hair as well: hearing the sounds He makes when speaking, singing or playing the flute, as well as smelling His fragrance eveywhere; moving constantly to be near Him at all times; this — alone is the reward of all who have sense — even liberation, if it is other

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, mantra (iv, 5, 6).
2. *Bhāgavata*, ślokas (IX, 4, 18-21). Translation from Mr. Reddington's *Vallabhācārya* on *The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 24.

than this, is not the proper reward, just as abiding for ever in darkness can never be the reward of the eyes. Thus even liberation is never the reward for beings endowed with sense and other faculties."[1] It is thus obvious that the idea of *Sarvātmabhāva*, both to Vallabha and the *Bhāgavata* is the saturating point of the state of obsession (*vyasana*) wherein there is a communion with the Lord on the basis of identity through the vigorous involvement of all the senses — that have already been purified — in the unsatiable thirst for drinking the nectar of delight flowing from Him in various moods.

The experience of God in all and all in God.

The second meaning of this term is brought out when the compound '*sarvātmabhāva*' is etymologically interpreted as '*sarvatra* (*sarvasmin*) *ātmano bhāvaḥ*' meaning the 'love of the individual soul for God in everyone and everything'. When the devotee while experiencing Kṛṣṇa in his particular mood reaches the final stage of obsession, the emotion and consciousness of his separation from the Lord generates such intense and puissant force of ecstatic love that he perceives the Lord in all things of the world and all things in Him, In this supreme state of devotion the devotee finds manifestation of the Lord everywhere and all worldly objects as only His parts (*aṁśas*). In the ecstacy of his love, the devotee sees God first and then "through Him as curtain or door he sees everything else. He is so obsessed with Kṛṣṇa that if he happens to look at ordinary object he sees, and loves, only Kṛṣṇa. The ecstatic devotee, then sees creatures through God, rather than vice-versa." [2]

Synthesis of the two meanings.

These two interpretations of the term '*sarvātmabhāva*' when correlated and synthesised comprehensively express its meaning and suggest its true nature. It is thus an advanced state of ecstatic love towards God, in obsession, during which the devotee enjoys the manifestation of the Lord in his inner self with all his sense and motor organs and the different mental psychoses. Yet, at times the Lord disappears from the devotee's heart resulting in a state of profound sorrow, caused by this separation and the high-pitch of the intensity of emotional attachment (*paramāsakti*). The result of this extremely

1. James, D. Reddington, S.J. : *Vallabhācārya on the Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 25.
2. *Ibid*, p. 27.

unbearable feeling of separation [1] (*vigāḍhabhāva*) is the consequent manifestation of the Lord in all things of the world and all things in Him. Everywhere the devotee finds the image of Kṛṣṇa just as a beloved in separation feels the presence of her lover all around. The significance of *vigāḍhabhāva* [2] as a necessary element in the generation of *sarvātmabhāva* is emphasised by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the *Bhāgavata*, when He refers to the psychological and spiritual condition of the Gopis at the time of His departure to Mathurā.

Sarvātmabhava both as a means and an end.

In their explanation of the concept of *sarvātmabhāva*, the Vallabhites tend to emphasise that it is both a means and an end. As the saturating point of supreme devotion at the *vyasana* state, it is a means to the attainment of Puruṣottama; yet, as real *bhakti* always leads to *bhakti*, which as *bhajanānanda* (the joy of worshipping the Lord) is an end in itself, it is a state to which a devotee would always desire to cling discarding even the prospect of liberation. Mr. Redington, however, explains this situation by contending that this is "a stage intermediate between means (*sādhana*) and reward (*phala*) on the path to union with Kṛṣṇa..... Total Love is both means and reward and yet it is also above one and a foretaste of the other. This intermediate nature of Total Love gives it both its uniqueness and its centrality as a doctrine of Vallabha's system." [3] The achievement of this high watermark of the state of obsession renders the devotee eligible to the dispensation of the reward — the participation in His Divine Sport — by Kṛṣṇa in accordance with the mood of the devotee wherein he continues to share the joy of worshipping the Lord.

Sarvātmabhāva a dispensation of God's Grace.

Certain significant doubts may, however, be raised here. What is the spiritual character of the experience and the being of the state of *Sarvātmabhāva*? Is this state, as a reward, brought about by human endeavour, depending on means, or is it purely a matter of Divine Grace? While commenting on the sūtra '*Pradānavadeva taduktaṁ*' [4] Vallabha argues that notwithstanding human effort in following the path of devotion and undergoing the various disciplines

1. Tīvraviyogaprabhṛtijanako vigāḍhabhāvaḥ paramāsaktirūpo yaḥ uktaḥ sa sarvātmabhāvaḥ. (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1116).
2. *Bhāgavata*, ślokas (xi, 12 to 15).
3. Reddington : *Vallabhācārya on The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*, p. 28.
4. *Brahmasūtra*, sūtra (3, 3, 43) with *Aṇubhāṣya*.

of *bhakti* as means the attainment of this state is possible only through God's Grace and Selection (*varaṇa*) because, by itself, no amount of human effort is capable of gaining the reward. When the devotee, realizing his impotence and inability in acquiring this state, surrenders himself to the Divine Mercy he obtains it through His Grace almost like an alm. The state of *Sarvātmabhāva* (Total Love) is actually conferred by God and not obtained by the individual soul through the causality of its own effort. This is clearly mentioned in the Upaniṣadic-text asserting that 'It is attainable only by him whom He selects.'[1]

The spiritual character of *Bhūman* or *Sarvātmabhāva*.

For understanding the real and ontological character of the spiritual experience of *Sarvātmabhāva* it may be prudent to discuss the nature of *Bhūman* — as explicated in the Nārada-Sanatkumāra dialogue of the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* — which to the Vallabhites is a philosophical term for *sarvātmabhāva* identified with real wisdom. Sanatkumāra told Nārada that real nature of the *Bhūman*, the Great or the Infinite, is eternal unconditioned Bliss. "That which indeed is the Infinite, That is bliss. There is no bliss in the finite."[2] That Infinite or *Bhūman* is immortal; the finite, the non-eternal and conditioned, on the other hand, is mortal. This Infinite, which in its real nature is pure, unconditioned, unlimited Bliss is established in its own *mahimā*, *vibhūti* or emanations. Thus the seer who realizes the real nature of the *Bhūman* becomes its seat; it transcends all sorrows and fear. what then is the nature of the *Bhuman* besides unlimited Bliss? The Upaniṣad tells, "The Infinite is that where one does not see anything else, does not hear anything else, and does not understand anything else."[3] To Vallabha this is exactly the spiritual[4] state of *Sarvātmabhāva*, brought about by the intensity of emotion (*vigāḍhabhāva*) caused by separation (*viraha*) from the or Lord Kṛṣṇa, where all around there is the illumination of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or Brahman. In such a state, Sanatkumāra tells, "He is in front, He is in the south, He is in the North. He is indeed

Sarvātmabhāva caused by *Vigāḍhabhāva*.

1. Yemevaiṣavṛṇute tenalabhyah. (*Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, mantra 3, 2, 3).
2. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VII, 23, 1)
3. *Ibid*, mantra (VII, 24, 1)
4. Etena sarvātmabhāva svarupamevoktam bhavati. Tatra virahabhāve ativigādhabhāvena sarvatra tadeva sphurati. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1124)
   Tatra bhūmā śabdena sa bhāva evocyate. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1157)

all this. Hence, after that follows the instruction with the help of the ego; 'I am indeed below, I am above, I am behind; I am in front, I am in the South, I am in the North, I indeed am all this." [1] And then the Upaniṣad continues; "Hence, thereafter follows the instruction with the help of the Ātman... The Ātman is below, the Ātman is above is behind, the Ātman is in front, the Ātman is in the South, the Ātman is in the North. The Ātman indeed is all this. Anyone who sees thus, reflects thus, understands thus, revels in the Ātman (*ātmarati*), has sport with the Ātman (*ātmakrīḍaḥ*), has union with the Atman (*ātmamithuna*), has bliss in the Ātman (*ātmānandaḥ*) becomes a sovereign. He acquires freedom of movement in all the worlds. On the other hand, those who understand other than this, come under a different ruler, and belong to the worlds that are subject to decay. They have no freedom of movement in all the worlds." [2]

Bhūman a state of unconditioned Delight.

This Upaniṣadic account of the *Bhūman* and *Sarvātmabhāva* clearly indicates that the nature of the *Bhūman* is not merely a state of Consciousness but also a state of unlimited, unconditioned Delight whose realization during Total Love makes the soul in ecstacy feel the universal presence of Godhead and then realize its identity with Him. This identification of the Infinite with the Self, as revealed in the instruction associated with 'ego' in such forms as 'I am Brahman', 'I am Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa is I', is only an intermediary state prior to the final realization that all is Ātman or Brahman. The knowledge of identity (*abheda*) between the Self and Brahman or Kṛṣṇa is only a *vyabhicārī-bhāva* occurring at the high-pitch of emotional intensity meant only for the furtherance of the emotion of love and devotion. To Vallabha the instruction of identity between jīva and Brahman in the Upaniṣad is not an assertion of their ultimate identity of Being as contemplated in the Vedānta of Śaṁkara but only a transitory sentiment and effect like the flowing of tears, beating of breasts, etc. termed in Indian Aesthetics as '*vyabhicārī-bhāva*'. Any tendency to understand this part of the text and such other Upaniṣadic instructions as conveyed in the Śvetaketu-dialogue or ejaculations of Vāmadeva as expressions of real ontological position

Significance of the instruction of identity; it is only *vyabhicārībhāva*.

1. *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, mantra (VII, 25, 1)
2. *Ibid*, mantra (VII, 25, 2)

would be misleading, according to Vallabha, for this would hamper the achievement of the joy of *bhajana* or loving service to Godhead (*bhajanānanda*), a natural fall out of the negation of the sense of duality. After embarking on the spiritual plane in which there is a sentiment of reciprocity with the Divine Personality and an assertion on One's Ego, the devotee realizes the deeper truth that all is Ātman or Brahman shaking off even the last vestiges of his ego. Here he finds himself as a part of the Divine, partaking His Divine Delight in all its nuances. In the state of *Sarvātmabhāva*, therefore, the idea of the ego is transformed into the realization that all is God.

The nature of spiritual experience.

What actually is the nature of the Divine manifestation and God-realization during *Sarvātmabhāva*? Is it a homogeneous, partless manifestation of Consciousness negating all idea of duality, as conceived by the Advaitins, or is it a dualistic consciousness with parts retaining the distinction and dualism between the devotee and His God? Vallabha, obviously for maintaining the ideal of *bhajanānanda*, discarded both the positions of pure-identity and pure-duality as irrelevant, contending that the position of Pure Monism where duality is the desired manifestation of monisic Reality or Advaita is the true representation of the character of revelation (*sphūrti*) during *Sarvātmabhāva*. Vallabha, therefore, contended that the manifestation during this state consists[1] of parts or duality and is essentially a monistic revelation of God. Pure Love is fundamentally dependent on the idea that the object of love is one's own and this is possible only when there is a sense of the unity of the substance notwithstanding the appearance of difference.

The explanation of *Sarvātmabhāva* as the acme of the state of attachment and obsession towards God is contemplated as an argument by Vallabhites to prove that the nature of God is all Delight. As God, by nature, is unlimited Delight and is a Paragon of Beauty, He is the object of attachment for *bhakta*; to be an object of love is an attribute of God which is fully realized during *Sarvātmabhāva*. As *Sarvātmabhāva* is a state of delight (*rasa*), its experience may be both of union (*saṁyoga*) and separation (*viyoga*); yet, during the state of separation, because of the intensity of *vigāḍhabhāva*, the Divine manifestation is most complete. This state is, therefore, a state of unlimited delight,

1. Kintu sakhanḍatadrūpā. (*Prakāśa* on *Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1124)

immortality, freedom from all kinds of sorrows and a freedom of movement. Because the identity of the devotee, as distinct from that of Puruṣottama, is not negated, he can, as the Upaniṣad tells, enjoy Brahman, take part in His Divine Sport, have union with Him and share His Divine Bliss.

Sarvātmabhāva different from *Mokṣa*.

A problem is often raised. Is this state identical with the state of liberation or is different from it? Vallabha, in answering this question, avers that the knowledge of the devotee during *Sarvātma-bhāva* is different from a jñāni's [1] consciousness and his knowledge of Self. Whereas for the follower of the Path of Knowledge liberation is the ultimate end, the participation in Brahman's Delight and His Divine Sport is the ideal of a *bhakta*. The state of *Sarvātmabhāva* where there is an effulgence of Delight is different from *Mukti* where the soul's union with the Akṣara-Brahman entitles it only to a limited amount of bliss. The state of *Sarvātmabhāva* is, therefore, different from the liberation of the seekers of the Path of Knowledge.

The two facets of *Sarvātmabhāva*.

Sarvātmabhāva, according to the author of *Prameyaratnārṇava*, is of two kinds [2] : (1) The one obtained through *Maryādāmārga* and (2) the other obtained through the path of *Puṣṭi*. The first kind of *sarvātmabhāva* was attained by King Ambarīṣa and is described in the Ninth Book of the *Bhāgavata*. The *sarvātmabhāva* obtainable through *Puṣṭi-path* was rewarded to the Gopis of the Vraja; it is elaborated with all its beauty and excellence in the Tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata*. Though the nature of *sarvātmabhāva* is almost identical in both the varieties, the *puṣṭi-type* is characterised by the amorous [3] emotion of love towards Kṛṣṇa. It is the presence of the mood of Śṛṅgāra in the attitude towards the Deity that differentiates it from Total Love of the *Maryādāmārga*.

The moods of love towards God

Before moving on to the next question as to what are the means that should be adopted for the generation of *bhakti*, it is important to reflect on the various mental modes (*bhāva*) through which the attitude and relationship of love with God may be expressed. These

1. *Aṇubhāṣya*. p. 1144.
2. *Prameyaratnārṇava*, p. 149.
3. *Ibid*, Chapter VI, p. 150.

forms of love as mentioned in the *Bhāgavata* and other scriptures are *Śānta*, *Dāsya*, *Sakhya*, *Vātsalya* and *Madhura*. "*Śānta* or the peaceful *bhāva* is that of the philosopher fully conscious of Divine Majesty and excellences and in the fullest development it ends in *Sāyujya* or mergence with the Impersonal aspect of Brahman. Here *Bhakti* is accepted as a means for attaining an end which is Mokṣa." [1] Technically, it does not fall within the ambit of *Premābhakti* which is considered to be the real nature of devotion in Vallabhite Religion. The other forms, namely, *Dāsya, Sakhya, Vātsalya* and *Madhura* are the different mental modes which express love towards God or Kṛṣṇa based on personal relationship. The *Dāsya* is the attitude of looking upon God as one's master. In the *Sakhya* and the *Vātsalya*, the devotee loves God as his friend and his or her child respectively. The *Madhura* or the conjugal attitude, which is the most important one from the Vallabhite standpoint, is a mental mode involving the loving relationship either between a wife and her husband or between the beloved and her lover incorporating even the category of illicit love. From the point of view of intimacy and intensity, the *Madhura* is considered and recognised as the most puissant and absorbing form of mental mode through which the emotion of love and service is expressible; even within this the illicit variety of love embodies the strongest form of affection because it sheds off all ethical norms and 'considerations of prestige, return, security and even self-preservation'. [2] Therefore, the love of the Gopis, involving a sexual attitude, is the high ideal of the path of *Bhakti*.

Refutation of the criticism against *Madhura*-form.

Very often the *Madhura* variety of devotion is criticised as unethical religious activity according sanction and sanctity to the immoral and sacrilegious relationship of sex involving all its perversity. They also degrade it on the ground that if *bhakti* is conditioned by an attitude of desire, always a necessary associate of sexual emotion, it would contradict the very definition of *bhakti* as uncaused and unconditioned. A proper study of the *Bhāgavata* and the writings of the Vallabhite thinkers would reveal how misplaced and irrelevant is such criticism. Before going into the merits of the reasons that impelled the *Bhāgavata* to explain the supreme devotional attitude and relationship with the *madhura-bhāva* it is necessary to understand

1. Swami Tapasyananda : *Nārāyaṇīyaṁ*, p. XXXVI.
2. *Ibid.*

a very pertinent principle on which the *Bhāgavata* founds the whole edifice of its philosophy of *Bhakti*. According to the *Bhāgavata*, any human passion when directed towards 'God is always responded by Him in a corresponding way and that in spite of its contrary appearance, it has the potency of *bhakti* and purifies and uplifts the aspirant concerned.'[1] Applying this theory to the concept of sexual love, it would appear that the absorption and concentration of the mind on Kṛṣṇa has invariably such a sanctifying effect on the human mind that all its impurities are destroyed; this is why the *Bhāgavata* tells that the Gopikas were raised by the power of their love for Kṛṣṇa from *Kāmukīs* to *Premikās*. Whatever may be the impelling mentality in the devotee's personal relationship with God, it is always purified by the Lord in return. This basic idea is amply illustrated in the *Bhāgavata's* narration of Kṛṣṇa's Love Games.

Another reason for the *Bhāgavata's* as well as Vallabha's emphasis on the *madhura-bhāva* as the supreme vehicle of devotional fervour is the fact that of all the human passions it is the passion of sexual love that is the most intense, dominating and all-engrossing and has the power of subjecting its agent to total self-surrender before the lover. Therefore, it is through this passion alone that the true nature of *bhakti* can be explained to the human mind. Because the sexual-bliss is the highest form of joy experienced by a human being, the excellence of the Divine Bliss can be explained and interpreted to him only on that plane and through it as the idiom. There is, however, nothing to suggest either that the blissful reward to a devotee has a sexual tinge or that it is conditioned by sexual passion because this state transcends all phenomenal attributes. The reference to desire (*kāma*) or enjoyment during the state of *sarvātmabhāva* also involves no contradiction because these are essentially transcendent and not phenomenal in character as already discussed by us in the preceding chapters. To such a transcendent state of reward and relationship between the devotee and the Lord no ethical norm is applicable for the Lord is always beyond it.

Vidyā identical with *Sarvātmabhāva*.

The state of *sarvātmabhāva* of a devotee which is different from the *sarvātmabhāva* (partless consciousness of all-pervasive self or Brahman) of the jñānī or the seeker after the Path of Knowledge is the real intention of the term '*vidyā*' occurring and praised in the

1. *Ibid*, p. XXXIII.

Upaniṣads. To Vallabha, the primary usage of the term *Vidyā* or Wisdom, according to Upaniṣads, is only *Sarvātmabhāva* which leads to the attainment of Puruṣottama and not to 'Knowledge'. As the result of knowledge is always the Akṣara-Brahman with limited bliss its identification with *vidyā* is always figurative and secondary [1] and not indicative and primary. The seers of the Upaniṣads, therefore, mean by '*vidyā*' only '*Sarvātmabhāva*'.

Bhakti, a tenth mood (*rasa*).

Before ending this discussion on the nature of *Bhakti* it is important to remember that the Vallabhites, following the footprints of the *Bhāgavata*, treat *bhakti* as the tenth mood (*rasa*) different from and superior to all the nine varieties of moods recognised in Saṁskṛta Aesthetic Theory. *Bhakti*, which is an unconditioned and perennial overflow of love towards God, a transcendent object, is by nature different from the mundane moods expressed and elaborated in literature and poetry. As a matter of fact, the nine moods, including Śṛṅgāra, of Indian aesthetic theory are only appearances of the real mood (*rasābhāsa*) and not the *Rasa* itself which is identical with Brahman. It is, therefore, foolish to identify *Bhakti* with *Śṛṅgāra* which is only a mundane, conditioned and phenomenal manifestation of love. Like the nine moods *Bhakti* too has its different sentiments (*bhāva*) that are governed by love, its permanent mood (*sthāyī-bhāva*); it is for the expression of this *rasa* and its communication to the human soul that the *Bhāgavata* has been created as already indicated in its final invocation verse which runs as follows :

"Drink, O, you connoisseurs on earth who have a taste for the beautiful, drink again and again this nectar of mood which lasts right up to the world's dissolution, this *Bhāgavata*, this fruit which has dropped from the wishing tree of the Vedas, endowed with the flowing-stream of nectar that comes from the mouth of Śuka."[2]

(F) BHAKTI AS MEANS

During the course of our discussions, we have noted that such individual souls that seek to realize Puruṣottama and desire either to

1. Tena tatra vidyāśabdaḥ prayogaḥ aupacārikaḥ, sarvātmabhāva eva mukhya. (*Aṇubhāṣya*, p. 1135).
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (I, 1, 3); translation from '*The Love Games of Kṛṣṇa*', p. 3.

Importance of *Bhakti* as a means.

have union with Him or participation in His Divine Sport have to follow either the *Maryādāmārga* or the *Puṣṭimārga* in accordance with their spiritual and mental qualifications and eligibility. They, in whom the spark of devotion is not properly kindled, must follow the Scriptural Path by disinterested action (*niṣkāma-karma* — taking all actions as works of God), acquisition of knowledge, performance of *yoga*, devotion (*bhakti*) and *tapas* so that ultimately they may obtain unshaking and permanent devotion towards the Lord by His Divine Grace. Yet, it may be difficult to tread over this path in modern times because of innumerable human weaknesses and proneness to sensualism. Howsoever we may feel that we can properly adopt the scriptural means the fact remains that most of us are incapable of acting according to the dictates of scriptural tests; we are, in reality, without the proper means (*nissādhana*) to God-attainment. As the *Puṣṭimārga* s meant for such people we have no recourse to scriptural means, Valla ɔha invites them to follow this path of Divine Grace by surrendering themselves and their egos at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa and engage themselves in His loving service. By consistently meditating on His lotus feet one is sure to invoke His Grace; meditation on His feet, according to Vallabha, is the surest way to eligibility to His Divine Grace and Mercy. When a person is initiated by the *Brahma-saṁbandha* ritual he surrenders everything to God and depends totally on His Mercy and Wish, his only function and activity being the loving service of God till he attains to the status of Constraint and Total Love. But the attainment of these states is so difficult that it is the privilege of only a few blessed saints. Others have to kindle the spark of devotion — which, according to Vallabha, is always present in each individual soul though covered and concealed with the thick layers of the ashes [1] of *avidyā* — by following the nine-disciplined devotion, known as *sādhana-bhakti*. The *Bhāgavata* unequivocally declares that *bhakti* generates *bhakti* (*bhaktyāsaṁjātayābhaktyā*) meaning thereby that *bhakti* as a means (*sādhanabhakti*) produces *bhakti* as effect or the *Premābhakti*. For reaching the highest state of *Sarvātmabhāva* the followers of both the *Maryādā* and *Puṣṭi* paths have to devote themselves to the service of the Lord by performing the nine-limbed devotion as instructed in the *Bhāgavata*. Praharāda, in Book Seven of the *Bhāgavata*, describes [2], "Śravaṇaṁ (hearing the narratives of the glorious deeds and excellences of Viṣṇu), *Kīrtanaṁ* (chanting His name and reciting hymns in His

Nine-disciplied devotion.

1. *Aṇubhāṣya* on sūtra (4, 1, 33).
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (VII, 5, 23).

praise), *Smaraṇaṁ* (remembering Him continuously), *Pādasevanaṁ* (serving His feet), *Arcanaṁ* (worshipping Him in images), *Vandanaṁ* (paying obeisance to Him and service of all beings with the vision that the whole universe is His manifestation), *Dāsyaṁ* (practising the role of a servant to Him), *Sakhyaṁ* (looking upon Him as an intimate friend) and *Ātmanivedanaṁ* (surrendering oneself totally to Him with body, mind and heart) — these are the nine forms of devotional discipline which man has to practise in a spirit of dedication to Viṣṇu".[1] Practising the earlier ones, one naturally reaches the state of *Ātmanivedana* or self-surrender of all his possessions, body, mind and the sense of ego, which is the last of these nine-disciplines. It is at this stage that a devotee becomes eligible to the *Premā* or the *Rati* form of devotion. But the performance of the *navadhābhakti* has generally to be preceded with holy company, freedom from sinful deeds and thoughts, intense faith and yearning for God; it is only the presence of these that can ensure the effectiveness of *Śravaṇa, Kīrtana* and other forms of disciplines. These, as Kuntī declared, lead a devotee, very soon, to the lotus feet of God [2].

Doctrine of *Prapatti*.

In Vallabha's religious doctrine the concept of self-surrender (*prapatti*) acquires a fundamental value and significance as it leads to his ultimate union with God. This *prapatti* is of three kinds : (1) *Maryāda-prapatti* in which the devotee imagines that the Lord is his and he depends completely on Him for his welfare. In hours of need, it is he who clings to the Lord like the off-spring of a monkey. (2) *Puṣṭi-prapatti* : In this type of *prapatti* the devotee, who resigns completely to God, is absolutely care-free. It is the Lord who has always to be conscious of his welfare and save him through His Grace. This type of *prapatti* is illustrated by the example of a cat's kitten which never cares for itself; it is the cat which has to look after the betterment of its progency. In this type of *prapatti* the devotee is free from all actions and *dharmas*; he has simply to devote himself to God with firm and unshaken faith and an unoscillating mental attitude and love towards Kṛṣṇa without even dreaming of any other Deity (*ananya*). The Gopis are the best examples of this type of *Prapatti*. (3) *Miśra-prapatti* [3] : This type of *prapatti* is a mixture of the *maryādā* and the *puṣṭi prapattis*. In this kind, both the Lord and the devotee have to discard some of their attributes for accepting each other. The best example of this type of *prapatti* is Arjuna.

1. Swami Tapasyanand : *Nārāyaṇiyaṁ*, p. xi.
2. *Bhāgavata*, śloka (I, 8, 36).
3. Radharani Sukhwal : *The Philosophy of Vallabha* (Hindi), p. 176.

Prapatti is further classified into *Śaraṇāgati* and *Ātmanivedana*.

Importance of *Ātmanivedana*.

The concept of *Śaraṇāgati* implies that a man should take shelter at the feet of the Lord with all his body, sense and motor organs, mind and soul with unflinching devotion. *Ātmanivedana*, on the other hand, is a total self-surrender to God with body, mind and sense and motor organs whose direction towards Him invariably purifies them of all their sins. The concept of *Ātmanivedana* which immortalises the devotee is so fundamental in Śrī Vallabha's path of *puṣṭi-devotion* that during the *Brahmasaṁbandha* ritual of initiation the aspirant has to express his self-surrender and the submission of all his possessions before Lord Kṛṣṇa in the presence of his teacher (*guru*) as Vallabha specifies in his *Siddhāntarahasya*, "First of all, in all actions, all things should be surrendered to God; things dedicated to God should not be utilised for personal use."[1] Total self-surrender, both as *Śaraṇāgati* and *Ātmanivedana*, is the ultimate step of nine-disciplined devotion[2] which paves the way for the devotee's entry into *Premābhakti*, the real *Sevā*, where his mind, out of its own accord and inherent susceptibility, develops a natural inclination towards God and continuous attraction and love for Him developing further into the stages of attraction (*āsakti*), obsession, constraint (*nirodha*) and *sarvātmabhāva*, where *bhakti* itself becomes an end. During the course of the preparatory stage and the performance of *bhakti* as a means, Vallabhite Religion lays down a plethora of religious activities in the form of daily rituals and ceremonies, aiming ultimately at the acquisition of a proper mental attitude and spiritual eligibility for total self-surrender whose account is verily out of the purview of this book. The sum and substance of Śrī Vallabha's philosophy and religion is, as declared by him[3], that the jīva's only duty (*dharma*) is always to engage itself in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Vraja, through *sarvātmabhāva*; there is no duty, at any time or place, other than devotion to Kṛṣṇa. He further asserts that if the Lord of Gokula is seated in the heart of a man, with body, mind and soul, there is no use of other mundane (*laukika*) and scriptural (*vaidika*) activity. Therefore, one should never give up remembering and undertaking the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, with *sarvātmabhāva*, in any way whatsoever.

1. *Siddhāntarahasa*, kārikā, 6.
2. T.D.N. *Sarvanirṇayaprakaraṇa*, p. 348.
3. *Catuḥślokī*, kārikā, 1 to 4.

CHAPTER XIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The exposition of the fundamental principles and the philosophical and religious standpoints of Śrī Vallabha and his eminent followers in the preceding chapters of this book may induce the reader and invigorate his mind to a proper understanding and assessment of the principal objectives that led them to the formulation of a philosophical system and scriptural interpretations that were essentially different from the doctrinal approaches of all other earlier masters like Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva. At the time of Śrī Vallabha's advent the theistic revolt against Śaṁkara, initiated by Rāmānuja, had ramified into the pluralistic philosophy of Madhva asserting and emphasising the ultimate and the absolute character of *dvaita* and the *pañcabhedas* with a clarion call that the doctrines of Grace and *Bhakti* are sustainable only on the foundations and presuppositions of his pluralistic philosophy undiluted with any sympathy towards any variety of non-dualism. This claim, however, appeared unjustified and irrelevant to Vallabha who was convinced that the scriptures — the Vedas, including the Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Āgamas* and the *Bhāgavata* — were all predominantly monistic in character comprehending and professing that the Ultimate Reality is always Non-Dual and Absolute, the Advaita; any attempt at establishing the ultimate truth of 'difference' between God, the souls and the world of Matter would be at variance with the principal teachings and the main spirit of Vedic Inspiration or Intuition. He, therefore, conceived of the Ultimate Reality or Brahman as Non-Dual, Determinate, Attributive, Concrete, Personal, transcending all the qualities of Prakṛti and, in essence, a tri-une Reality of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, the *Saccidānanda*. This Brahman, to him, is the only truth which manifests itself in diverse forms of souls and matter,

Vallabha's insistence on Ultimate Reality as non-dual, determinate and concrete.

as per Its own Wish, unassisted by any other principle like the inexplicable *Māyā* of the Śaṁkarites. His philosophical system which is immune from the clutches of Śaṁkara's *Māyā* is, therefore, termed as *Śuddhādvaita* or Pure Non-Dualism. Yet, Brahman is not totally free from *Māyā*. Brahman's *Māyā*, as advocated in Vallabha's system, is only His power which, at His Wish, manifests itself to propel the manifestation of the Cosmos of Material Universe and Spirits.

It may be recalled, that Śaṁkara always insisted that the essential, transcendental and ultimate nature of Brahman is indeterminate, quality-less, immutable, homogeneous *advaita* and that the description of Brahman as 'the possessor of good smells, good essences etc.'[1] as an embodiment of all excellences and attributes is only a narration of Its *māyika* or phenomenal aspect which is lower in point of reality to the ultimate, indeterminate and immutable aspect of the Absolute. Consequently, he speculated that *nirguṇa-śrutis* are superior to the *saguṇa-śrutis* with the result that in the event of a contradiction between the two it is the former one that should be taken as valid. Vallabha joined the Vaiṣṇavite revolt against Śaṁkara's conceptions of Brahman of *Para* and *Apara* and the distinction which he created between the *svarūpa* and *taṭastha* forms of the definition (*lakṣaṇa*) of Brahman. He and his followers advocated, with full force and vigour, that as testimony both the *nirguṇa* and the *saguṇa śrutis* are equally valid and their descriptions should be construed indicatively (*abhidhā*) without taking any recourse to the figurative method (*lakṣaṇā*) as far as possible. How, then, is the apparent contradiction between the *nirviśeṣa* (those describing Brahman as Indeterminate) and the *saviśeṣa* (those describing Brahman as Determinate) *śrutis* to be reconciled? Vallabha reconciles this difficulty by propounding the theory that Brahman is the repository of contradictory attributes (*viruddhadharmāśraya*) and is capable of being all and anything at any moment or place as per His own Wish (*sarvabhavanasamartha*). When the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* describes Brahman as the One "That moves, That does not move; That is far off, That is very near; That is inside all, and That is outside all"[2] it refers to

Denunciation of the distinction between *Para* and *Apara* Brahman and the superiority of *nirguṇa śrutis*.

1. *Chāndogyopaniṣad* mantra (3, 14, 2).
2. *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, mantra 5.

these two fundamental and essential characteristics of Brahman forming the basis of Brahman's formulations both into Its own statuses, as Puruṣottama, Akṣara and Antaryāmin and Its Cosmic Form and its successive evolutions. With his philosophy of different statuses of Brahman, as explained in the relevant chapter of this book, Vallabha could easily explain all the scriptural texts without committing the sin and perfidy of denigrating a part of the Vedas to a class of lower validity. Such an interpretation also enabled him to demonstrate that the Upaniṣads and the other Vedic texts always explained to the enquirer only that aspect of Brahman which suited his spiritual qualifications and eligibility (*adhikāra*) reserving the narration and description of Puruṣottama for the most suitable student, the devotee.

We have already observed how Vallabha endeavoured to convince that the Ultimate Truth, the Absolute, is always positive howsoever unattainable it may be not only to the logical categories of human reason and mind but even to the Hiraṇyagarbha, the first born. Since a positive existence is always determinate, the Ultimate Reality has to be Determinate and Attributive notwithstanding the truth that Its attributes transcend not only human reason and logic but transcend also the three *guṇas* of Prakṛti; it is in this sense that the Scriptures assert Its non-attributive (*nirguṇa*) character. The transcendent attributes of Brahman being trans-logical are knowable only through the testimony of the Vedas and other Vedic Scriptures. We have also demonstrated, at length, the Vallabhite defence of their doctrine that Puruṣottama is the Supreme Personality of Godhead in whom there is a full manifestation of Divine Bliss. Since Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa is the supreme aspect of Brahman, Vallabha consistently preached that a loving devotion towards Him, with a sense of total surrender, is the only means of not only emancipation from human bondage but is also the ultimate instrument of obtaining the extraordinary capability of entry and participation in His Divine Sport.

Meaning of *nirguṇatva*.

Puruṣottama, the supreme aspect of Brahman

All monistic philosophies have a common source of trouble-the problem of explaining the external-world or the Cosmic Universe without entailing its unreality so that the basic principles and truths and axioms of religion and ethics may not be demolished. Vallabha, as a doyen of the Vaiṣṇavite movement, had to find a solution of this

problem in consonance with his advaitic philosophy of Brahman as the sole Reality. Vallabha, as we have noticed, explained the cosmic-order as a real formulation and manifestation of the *sat* and *cit* attributes of Brahman; the universe of Matter deriving its form and existence from the *sat*-attribute and the spirits or souls being manifested, like sparks from a blazing fire, from the *cit-attribute* of Brahman.The facts of world-creation and world-dissolution, which go on eternally, are explained successfully on the foundations of his *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva* theory. Objects in the world are, no doubt, non-eternal and transient but, to Vallabha, non-eternality is not a synonym of unreality. Things may be short-lived and yet they may be quite real without any iota of false-hood. The cosmic-universe is just an aspect of Brahman which He sustains along with His transcendental, immutable and blissful aspect on account of His being the ground of contradictory attributes. This world-manifestation is caused by Brahman's *Māyā* or power which is identified, in Vallabhism, with His power of being all and each at the same time and place. Brahman is, thus, to Vallabha the inherent as well as the instrumental cause of the world- order in a real sense. Brahman's determination as the cause of world's origination, sustenance and destruction is not His *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* or figurative definition, as contemplated by Śaṁkara, but is His real definition, the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*. Brahman is the real cause of the manifestation of a real world-order. Vallabha, therefore, finds the Rāmānujite and the Mādhva philosophies, explaining the origination of world from either the *acit* part of Brahman or from *Pradhāna*, as both irrelevant and misrepresentative of the Upaniṣadic and other Scriptural texts. The reason for cosmic manifestation and emergence of the world-order lies squarely in Brahman's desire to be many and to enter into sport for the realization of His own Bliss. Brahman is, therefore, the real agent and enjoyer.

Explanation of cosmic-order through *Āvirbhāva-tirobhāva* theory.

'Janmādyasya yataḥ' is the *Śvarūpa-lakṣaṇa* of Brahman

The individual-soul in Vallabhism, like all other Vaiṣṇavite systems, is a part or *aṁśa* of Brahman — strictly in the Vallabhite sense — atomic in dimension and conscious in character working and aspiring, as an agent, for the realization of its lost bliss in the ephemeral objects of cosmic-universe. Due to the Lord's Wish, the soul's bliss, along with its other celestial

The Jīvātman.

attributes is concealed and as a result it, under the influence of *Māyā*, is associated with *avidyā*, with its five knots, to suffer the torments of earthly bondage. It is only when this *avidyā* or nescience is suppressed by *vidyā* (wisdom) that the soul finds initiation into the path of devotion and surrender and is ultimately graced by the Lord with participation in His Divine Sport.

Bhakti superior to *Jñāna* and *Karma*.

As an exponent of the Bhakti-cult Vallabha naturally accorded primary importance to devotion (*bhakti*) as an instrument of emancipation over and above the other two Vedic paths of Action and Knowledge. Instead of undermining their utility, he explained their real concepts and significance and underscored their limitations by assigning their fruits and rewards and emphasising the mental qualifications and eligibility of the aspirants. Yet, he was confidently emphatic that the highest reward, which is even superior to *Mokṣa*, is attainable through the loving devotion of the Lord, the Puruṣottama or Kṛṣṇa. When the Lord of the Gokula has taken His seat in a man's heart, what else remains to be obtained?

Brahmavāda and *Puṣṭi-mārga* are Vallabha's chief contributions.

Though the Brahmavāda or the Śuddhādvaita philosophy of Śrī Vallabhācārya which is a novel and original metaphysical system erecting its edifice on the faults and failures of all other schools of philosophy is itself a landmark to establish his genius, yet his greatest epoch-making contribution to Indian philosophy and Religion is his innovation of the *Puṣṭi-mārga* and the doctrine of *Puṣṭi-bhakti*. *Maryādā* or the *vaidhi* form of *bhakti*, though equally respectful, is a destination of a long journey that has to traverse its course through the performance of yoga and acquisition of knowledge which is extremely difficult, if not impossible, in this modern age. Not only this, the adoption of the path of Scriptural Devotion is impermissible to several sections of human society. Vallabha, therefore, advocated that the *Puṣṭi-path* is the only shelter for the human society as a whole, including women, the foreigners and the outcaste. The *raison d'etre* of Devotion, according to Vallabha, is the emotion of love towards God which when unbroken and unbriddled acquires its high acme in Obsession, *Nirodha* and *Sarvātmabhāva* wherein the real nature of

The *Puṣṭi*-path.

Godhead is revealed and the devotee acquires the extraordinary capability of participation in Brahman's or Kṛṣṇa's Eternal Sport.

It may not be out of place to remark that the adoption of the path of Grace (*puṣṭimārga*) is not so simple and easy as most of the people are often led to believe; it has several pitfalls of its own. This path of Grace also envisages, like all other means advocated in other systems of Indian Philosophy and Religion, a certain degree of spiritual uplift, qualification and eligibility in the absence of which the aspirant would be engaging himself only in a wild goose chase. The essential spiritual endowments are the sense of God's Glory (*māhātmya*),-which is the only purpose of all scriptural studies, the emotion of love towards Him with an accompanied feeling of detachment towards world and its objects and the feeling of self-surrender and *ātmanivedana*, details of which have already been discussed. During the course of our deliberations on *Puṣṭimārga*, we have observed that the initiation into this path may occur either totally by way of Lord's selection caused by His Divine Grace or may be routed through *Maryādāmārga*, when the *jñānī* is overwhelmed with a transcendental emotion of love towards God. This emotion of love is acquired after the *jñānī's* own realization of Self and is strictly *aprākṛtika*, transcendental or celestial in character. The soul's entry into the domain of emotion, at this stage, leads it by the performance of the different states of *bhakti* into the Lord's Eternal Sport. On the other hand, those chosen few who are selected by God follow the Path of Love unhindered and unblemished on the authority of the Lord Himself. The path of *Puṣṭi* is, therefore, highly spiritual highway leading to the realization of the God's *svarūpa* and entry into the Gokula for serving as Kṛṣṇa's servant.

In our chapter, 'The Theory and Practice of Bhakti', we have expounded, in detail, the philosophy of Vallabhite *Bhakti*, differentiating it from 'worship' and '*upāsanā*' and exploring that *bhakti*, which is a loving service to God, is a separate mood in itself. It is thus for the first time in the history of Vaiṣṇavite movement that *Bhakti* is raised to a lofty spiritual and emotional plane serving as an end in itself, never grasped by the earlier masters like Rāmānuja and Madhva to whom *bhakti* was almost identical with *upāsanā*. It has, however, found expression and equivalent vibration in the emotional

Śrī Vallabha's contribution.

devotionalism or *rāgātmikābhakti* of Śrī Caitanya and his followers. As Śrī Caitanya was a junior contemporary of Śrī Vallabha, the possibility of a mutual influence between the sects of the two masters cannot be overruled specially when they worked in close co-operation till the unfortunate dispute [1] over the question of authority and possession over Lord Śrī Nātha's idol arose. However, in their philosophy and religion the Schools of Śrī Vallabha and Śrī Caitanya, especially the Jīva-Goswāmī version, abound in points of similarity that are obvious to any discerning mind.

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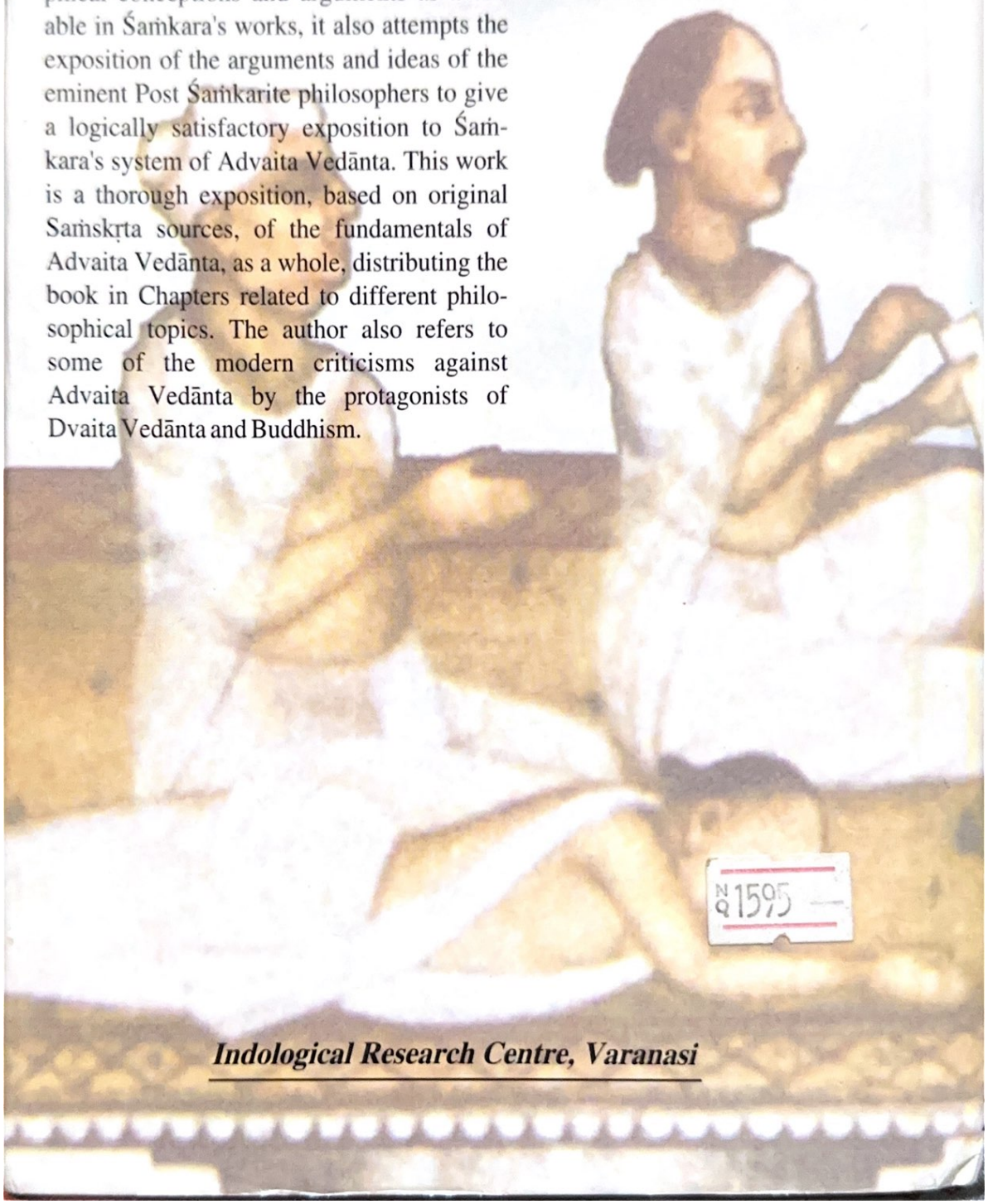

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